TRAVANCORE UNIVERSITY
ENGLISH SERIES No. 8

SOME ASPECTS OF KERALA AND TAMIL LITERATURE

Part II

Lectures delivered under the auspices of the University in
1945—1946

BY

RAO SAHIB M. RAGHAVA AIYANGAR,
(Professor of Tamil, University of Travancore.)

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH

BY

J. PARTHASARATHI, M. A.

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PRICE ANNAS 12.

First Impression : Copies 300

Published by
The University of Travancore

Printed at the
Prakash Printing and Publishing House,
Trivandrum.

PREFACE

The present publication is Part Two of the substance of the lectures delivered by me in 1945–46 as Professor of Tamil under the Sri. Rm. Alagappa Chettiar Endowment. It deals chiefly with Kerala festivals and place-names. The mutual benefit that results from a correlation of Tamil literature with Kerala life and letters is also briefly noticed. An Appendix containing some brief notes on some topics of interest to the research worker has been added. The inaugural lecture on *Kanthalur-Salai* delivered in 1945–46 has been omitted from this volume, for publication as a separate brochure.

I trust that this English translation of my Tamil lectures will serve to awaken a sense in non-Tamil readers of the value of the type of research indicated herein. To the authorities of the University of Travancore who have made this publication possible, I express my sincere thanks.

TRIVANDRUM,
1–3–1950.

M. RAGHAVA AIYANGAR.

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OF

KERALA AND TAMIL LITERATURE

Part II

SECTION III

FESTIVALS AND OBSERVANCES

1. THE ONAM—PAST AND PRESENT

A NATIONAL FESTIVAL

The Onam today is celebrated as the national festival of Kerala ; it is an occasion of universal rejoicing in Malabar. It is, however, a pleasant surprise to know that in the past, the celebration of the Onam was not confined to Kerala alone ; it was indeed a festival of the whole of South India, of all the three old Kingdoms of the Cheras, the Cholas and the Pandyas.

TRADITION

The origin of the Onam festival is unfortunately lost in obscurity. Popular tradition in Malabar says that Onam commemorates the day on which Mahabali visits the earth year after year. The story is that Mahabali, one of the proud sovereigns of the earth, during a great sacrifice unwittingly gifted away his kingdom—the entire earth—to Lord Vishnu, who had appeared before him on the occasion in the guise of a suppliant dwarf. But the King succeeded in obtaining a boon from the grantee, allowing him once a year to revisit the earth, the scene of his former sovereignty. Kerala tradition exalts this annual visit of Mahabali, and it is thus clear that the Onam festival is, in essence, a glorification of the achievements of Lord Vishnu in one of His Avatars—the incarnation as a Vamana or Dwarf.

The name of the asterism *(nakshatra)* under which the festival is celebrated is also suggestive of religious associations. It is *Tiru-Onam*, and it is particularly noteworthy that out of the twenty-seven asterisms of the Hindu calendar, only in this and another asterism—*Tiru-adirai*—the honorific prefix '*Tiru*' is found. Further, the prefix in these two words is inseparable from the names themselves unlike with reference to other asterisms, where '*Tiru*' may be added or omitted at the option of the speaker, without affecting the meaning of the word. '*Tiru*' is the equivalent of *Sri* in Sanskrit and connotes a special sacredness. In the case of *Tiru-adirai*, the sacredness relates to Siva, but in respect of *Tiru-Onam*, the sacredness relates to Lord Vishnu. The Puranas say that the Avatar of Vamana took place under the influence of this asterism.

CELEBRATION OF VAMANA AVATARA

The evidence of early Tamil literature as well as present day practice in Kerala enforces the belief that *Thiru-Onom* is specially a celebration of the Vamana Avatara. It is well known that Onam is sacred to Lord Vishnu of the Venkata or Tiruppati hills, though the reason for this belief has not so far been clear. We must turn to Tamil literature for light on this point. We find that the Lord of Tiruppati has been celebrated even from ancient times (as far back as the Sangam period and probably even earlier) to be the visible manifestation of Vamana Avatara of Vishnu who out-measured the Universe. There are many literary references to the Vamana characterestic of that deity. The Sangam poets describe the Lord of the Venkata hills as *Nediyon* (the Towering One) who measured the vast universe. The great commentator, *Nacchinarkiniyar*, explaining why the Tiruppati hills are mentioned as the northern boundary of the Tamil land, attributes the reason to the fact that it is the place where the world, *i. e.*, the great seers that did penance to the Lord who measured the Universe, attained

salvation. The Vedas declare that He who measured the world with His three steps, that Lord dwells on the hill.[1] Bringing out the spirit of these Vedic lines and commenting on them, as it were, Nammalvar, the foremost among the Vaishnavite mystics says: "He who measured the three worlds, dwells on the Tiru Venkata (Tiruppati) hills."[2] And Sri Vedanta Desika, another great saint and teacher, aptly speaks of the Venkata Hills as *Vedaverpu*, the hill of the Vedas. It is, therefore, a safe inference that the Lord of the Venkata hills had an aspect of Vamana, and it is to this aspect of the deity that the Tiru-Onam festival has been considered particularly sacred.

ONAM IN KERALA

Turning to the practice in Kerala, we find that the Onam is regarded as peculiarly sacred to Lord Vishnu, enshrined at Tirukkakarai, situated in Northern Travancore, about two miles and a half to the south of Edappalli station. This place is reckoned as one of the thirteen *Divya Desams* (holy places) of *Malai Nadu* (Kerala) held sacred by the Sri Vaishnavas. The image of the God of Tirukkakkarai is stated to be in the Vamana Avatara form, and hence the place is also called *Vamanakshetram* This is indeed a striking parallelism; the festival of the Vamana of the Tirupati hills has no doubt its compeer in the festival of the Vamana of Tirukkakkarai.

During the festival of Onam an image of Tirukkakkarai Appan is made of earth and worship is offered to this image

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1. മൃഗോന ഭീമഃ കുചരോ ഗിരിഷ്ഠാഃ
യസ്യോരുഷു ത്രിഷു വിക്രമണേഷു.
അധിക്ഷിയന്തി ഭുവനാനി വിശ്വാഃ
(Also *vide* my Collected Essays (Araichi Tohuti) pp. 267–9).
2. "அன்று ஞாலம் அளந்த பிரான் பரன்
சென்று சேர் திருவேங்கட மாமலை" (Tiruvaimoli)

by almost all sections of the people. The festive season lasts for seven days. It begins on Hastham day with the hoisting of the flag at Tirukkakarai. The week before Tiru-Onam, commencing from the asterism, Visakam, constituted the actual festival period. The significance of the Onam festival, associated as it is with Tirukkakarai Appan, is that it is a celebration of the Lord's Victory over Mahabali, the victory of spiritual power over worldly glory.

A PICTURE OF ONAM IN LITERATURE

A brilliant account of the Onam is preserved for us in Tamil literature. In the Sangam period more than one thousand five hundred years ago, the Onam was celebrated as a national festival even in parts of South India outside Kerala. In his remarkable poem, *Madurai-k-kanji*, Mangudi Marudanar, one of the illustrious poets of the Sangam Age, gives a vivid description of the Onam festival as celebrated at Madura, the capital of the Pandyas. He tells us that the festival usually came off under the asterism of Onam, the occasion of the advent of *Mayon* (Vishnu) who came to put down the Asuras.[3] The very name 'Onam,' obtaining at present in Kerala, is used here. The poem takes the form of an exhortation to the victorious Pandya Ruler, *Neduncheliyan* of *Talayalanganam* fame, holding his customary court on the day after the festival. The seventh day witnessed exceptional joy and festivity; and on the next morn, the drums roared. The king sat in durbar and gave presents to his people. The chiefs of the army, warriors, officials of state, bards and dancers hurried in full concourse to the royal courtyard. The warrior king was seated on a magnificent throne in the tastefully decorated audience hall. He first bestowed his attention on the heroes who had made possible his glorious victories in arms. His generosity and kindness

3. அவுணற்கடந்த மாயோன் மேய ஓணநன்னாள்.

to them, on that day, surpassed all limits. Professional singers, dancers and poets received presents from the king according to their deserts. Lastly, the poet *Mangudi Marudanar* came forth and addressed the king in sweet and solemn song. Dwelling on the Onam festival celebrated in his capital, as well as in his wide domains, and on his great conquests, the poet also sounded a note of caution against the king wasting away his lifetime in mere worldly conquest. The monarch was reminded of the vanity of worldly splendour against the enduring value and unquenchable glory of a life of the spirit.

It is significant that the poet has reserved his high theme, as it were, for the very day when the Lord in his Avatar of Vishnu demonstrated the glory of spiritual life over the strength of man, however great the latter might be.

The lines of the poem also testify to the importance attached to this festival by the king and his people. The Onam levee of the Royal Courts of Kerala in the present day is a happy reminiscence of the court held by *Nedunjeliyan*, the Pandya king of ancient fame. The Onam durbars of recent times are a sort of commentary on the old descriptive verse of the Tamil classic, which otherwise, would remain a sealed book to us.

The Onam is also celebrated by the Vaishnava saint, *Perialvar*, in his devotional songs, the *Tiru-Pallandu* and other *Patikams* forming the first part in the collection of Vaishnavite scriptures called *Nalayira Divya Prabandham*-the Divine Four Thousand. In one touching verse, the Alvar tenderly and playfully addresses Vishnu as Lord Krishna:

"Oh Lord, Tiru-Onam is the seventh from today. I have begun the festival with the auspicious song of benediction *(Pallandu)* sung by damsels with melodious voices. The delicacies of rice and fruits meant for Thee are well prepared. Do not go away as usual with your grazing cattle to the

jungle, from tomorrow. Remain at home and delight us in your charming attire."

The celebration of the Onam and the endowments made therefor are constantly referred to in inscriptions. Grants of land were made for the feeding of persons during the festival. In the shrine of Tirukkakarai for which the Onam has special significance, an inscription (published in Travancore Archaeological Series, Vol. II, page 85) makes mention of *Avani-Onam-Aduvan* (the donor for the feeding on Onam day) in the month of *Avani.*

GENIUS OF KERALA

The question may arise as to why the Tiru-Onam day should be observed in Tamil Nad in the month of Kanni (Purattasi) and not in Chingom (Avani), the month in which the festival is celebrated in Kerala. The difference arises because of the varying method of calculation in relation to the movements of the sun and moon. It is, however, remarkable that the Tamil country, in spite of its having forgotten the history and tradition of the Onam as a national festival, is yet observing the day as sacred to Lord Sri Venkateswara or Vishnu.

As the celebration of the Onam is commemorated by one of the Alvars, we are right in assuming that the institution of this festival gradually fell into disuse outside Kerala about the tenth century A. D. immediately after the age of the Alvars. The Onam festival is indeed a source of spiritual strength and national solidarity. We owe a deep debt of gratitude to the genius of Kerala, which has handed down to us in its pristine purity, a festival celebrating the victory of divine forces over boastful human strength, an acclamation of the kingdom of God on earth triumphing over the sway of mortal man.

2. THE TIRUVADIRAI FESTIVAL—ITS MISSING LINKS

THE FESTIVAL.

One of the chief festivals of Kerala is celebrated in the month of Dhanu (Margali) under the asterism of Tiruvadirai. On this occasion worship is offered to Siva, as in Tamil Nad.[1] But more important still, there are certain festivities specially observed by Kerala women. These are described at length in several interesting books on Kerala Folklore.[2]

These festivities commence a week before reaching their climax and finale on Tiruvadirai day. Women wake up in the early hours of dawn, and with boys as torch-bearers to light their way, proceed to the tanks and rivers and have a ceremonial bath. Especially little girls form themselves into bathing parties for the purpose and joyously plunge into the water, singing songs on Manmatha, the God of Love. These songs are usually begun by some one of the party to be later followed by others in antiphonal chant. Pressing their left hands below water level, they beat the water with the palms of their right hands, giving rise to a musical tune. To the accompaniment of this tune, they sing their hymns. The bath known as *tudichu kuli* and the singing, take place till dawn brightens into sunrise. Then they go home, dress

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1. In Tamil Nad, the chief celebration of the season is the Ardra Darsanam.
2. Vide *Malabar and its Folk* by Gopala Panikkar; *Folk Plays and Dances of Kerala* by M. D. Raghavan.

themselves in their best, paint their eyes with dark collyrium, wear the vermillion mark on their foreheads, and amuse themselves by swinging on the *unjal*. Towards the evening, they worship at a Bhagavati shrine and thereafter prepare for their all-night vigil, for sleep is forbidden as, if they sleep, the benefit of the fast is lost. There is continued jollity, the night being given up to various amusements and dances to the accompaniment of *Tiruvadirai pattu*, a series of melodious songs specially sung for the occasion. Thus, this festival which is known to be a fertility rite in intention and origin as well as an invocation to the Goddess to bless the maidens with matrimony during the course of the year, ends on the Tiruvadirai day, when a grand dinner (comprising among other items, fruits and sweet *payasam*) is arranged. It is also considered a matter of good etiquette for husbands to be present on this memoral eoccasion, even as in the ase of the festivals of *Oma*anb *Vishu*.

OBSERVANCES IN TAMILNAD.

To what extent can the above practices in Kerala be correlated with those in Tamil Nad? There is no specific observance at present by maidens in the Tamil country. But the whole month of Dhanu (the Tamil Margali) - the holiest of months according to the Lord's pronouncement in the *Bhagavad Gita*[3]— is kept sacred by all Hindus. The Vaishnavites read the *Tiruppavai*[4] of Sri Andal, the great daughter of Perialvar, while the Saivites study the *Tiruvembavai*[5] composed in honour of Siva and his devotees,

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3. മാസാനാം മാർഗശീർഷോഽഹം

4. The *Tiruppavai* is composed of thirty stanzas, of which one is recited each day of the month.

5. *The Tiruvembavai* is composed of twenty stanzas, and is commonly read for ten days. The *Tiruvambala Sarukkam* of the *Tiruvadavurar Puranam* gives an account of the origin of the *Tiruvembavai*: cf. A. R.12 of 1905.

by Saint Manikkavacagar. The *Tiruppavai* is a poem in picturesque verse describing a fast which in days of yore the maidens of Gokulam undertook for the love of Sri Krishna. Thereby, they could get Him as their lover, as well as bring much-wanted rains to the parched earth. The *Tiruvempavai* is also a similar fast undergone by young maidens for propitiating Siva's dear devotees, which is a primary duty considered even more important than pleasing God. It is thus clear that both *Manikkavacagar* and *Andal* have used as the machinery of their poem one and the same fast observed by maidens.

THE OLD KATYAYANI VRATA.

What is the source of the common observance of both the poets of the *Tiruppavai* and the *Tiruvempavai*? We find this in the *Bhagavatam*, the popular *Purana of* Sri Krishna's life and doings. In the twenty-second chapter of the Tenth Canto *(Dasamaskandha)* of the work, it is stated that the maidens of Gokulam were bidden to observe a fast with Sri Krishna as their leader. The ostensible purpose of the fast was to bring abundant rains to the land and ensure the general prosperity of the cowherd colony of Gokulam. The maids, therefore, got up early in the morning, bathed in the river Jumna, making an image of *Katyayani* or *Devi* of river-sand. This image they worshipped, offering it incense, flowers and fruits in the usual manner. Intoxicated as the maidens were with the beauty of the Divine child's figure, they prayed to Goddess *Devi* not merely for rains, but to grant unto them Lord Krishna as their husband. Throughout the month of *Dhanu*, the girls observed this fast, parties of them going round and walking up with their companions for the bath at break of dawn. The account of the *Bhagavatam* thus makes clear to us the fact that the fast is in essence a worship of *Devi* for certain specified objects, like the prosperity of the land, and the attainment of good husbands by yet unmarried girls.

Peria-Vacchan Pillai, a great Vaishnavite teacher and author of a commentary of Sri Andal's Tiruppavai, remarks that the fast of the maidens of Gokulam, described in that poem, finds its ratifying authority only in the "practice of the great."[6] But in spite of this statement, it will be clear to any critical student of literature that the *Tiruppavai* has definitely used the story of the *Bhagavatam* as a means of praise to Lord Krishna. Each stanza of the poem ends with a phrase *(Empavai)* meaning "Oh! our image!" and this should properly be explained as referring to the image of Devi made by the maidens before their bath.[7]

The *Tiruvempavai* of *Manikkavacagar* too, has the same twofold purpose as the *Tiruppavai*: a prayer for abundant rains as well as for the attainment of Siva's devotees as husbands by the fasting damsels. Two of the verses are also actually in praise of Devi.[8] The headlines to the entire poem assigned by the author himself or some later-day scholar, is called "Praise of *Sakti*" or Devi. *Manikkavacagar*, has thus apparently used as a literary convention the *Katyayani vrata* described for us in the pages of the Bhagavatam.

FESTIVAL CURRENT IN SANGAM AGE.

The fast observed by the maidens of Gokulam was in great vogue in the Sangam Age, judging from frequent

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6. 'சிஷ்டாசாரம்' is the word used.
7. To those who feel that a saint of Andal's type would not debase herself with praise of any lesser deity like Katyayani, it may be pointed out that she did not deign to praise the Lord of Love, Kama Deva, in another set of stanzas beginning "தையொரு திங்களும்" Praise to lesser gods she would certainly give as a means of fulfilling her decidedly high aim.
8. Tiruvacakam, Tiruvempavai, St. 14 & 16

references to it in Sangam classics. The "*Paripadal*," a collection of songs on a variety of themes, has a full stanza describing the bath of maidens in the river of *Vaigai*, Stanza 11[9] of this collection by the poet Nallanduvanar says that on the full moon day of *Thiruvadirai*, the ceremony is commenced with the aid of learned Brahmanas. Praying for the fertility of the wide earth, bright-braceleted maids led by the elder women bathe in the river, as the frost rains in the dawn. Shivering in the chill air, they seek the warmth of the Vedic fires kindled on the banks by holy men. The Vaigai has witnessed all this. Thanks are rendered to this river, for penance followed by bath in its waters earned maidens their wished-for husbands. Even from a cursory reading of the poem and its usual footnote, one realizes that the picture here presented is that of the festivity which forms the bases of the Tiruppavai and the Tiruvempavai.

The festival is also called *Ambavadal* meaning a preformance in honour of *Amba* or *Devi*. It is also sometimes

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9. "கனைக்கு மதிர்குரல் கார்வானம் நீங்கப்
பனிப்படு பைதல் விதலைப் பருவத்து
ஞாயிறு காயா நளிமாரிப் பிற்குளத்து
மாயிருந் திங்கள் மறுநிறை யாதிரை
விரிநூ லந்தணர் விழவு தொடங்க
வெம்பா தாக வியனில வரைப்பென
அம்பா வாடலி னாய்தொடிக் கன்னியர்
முனித்துறை முதல்வியர் முறைமை காட்டப்
பனிப்புலர் பாடிப் பருமணல் அருவியின்
ஊதை யூர்தர வுறைசிறை வேதியர்
நெறிநிமிர் நுடங்கழல் பேணிய சிறப்பிற்
றையன் மகளி ரீரணி புலர்த்தர
வையை நினக்கு மடைவாய்த் தன்று;
மையாட லாடல் மழபுலவர் மாறெழுந்து
பொய்யாட லாடும் புணர்ப்பி னவரவர்
தீயெரிப் பாலுஞ் செறிதவமுன் பற்றியோ
தாயருகா நின்று தவத்தைந்நீ ராடுதல்
நீயுரைத்தி வையை நதி".

called *Margali Niradal* or *Tai Niradal*[10] signifying the fact that the bath took place either in the month *Dhanu* (the equivalent of *Margali*) or *Makaram* (the equivalent of *Thai*). This difference arises because of the method of calculation adopted. The modern method of reckoning commences only from the new moon day while the ancient method began with the full moon day. It is thus clear that the latter half of the present *Dhanu* and the former half of the modern *Makaram* together formed the old month of *Dhanu* in the Sangam Age.

SINGING GOD'S PRAISES.

This festival of the month of Dhanu–Makaram has been called '*Pavai*' and '*Pavaippattu*' in Tamil literature.[11] The Pingala Nigantu, a lexicon in verse, tells us that girls of the ages five to nine specially resorted to this festival.[12] During the period of the observance, the maidens would sing the praises of the Lord, and touch not milk or ghee. Nor would they paint their eyes with collyrium, nor adorn their tresses with flowers. Shunning all evil in thought and speech, and extending their helping hands in charity, the maidens go about, serenity enthroned in their hearts. Various noises would mingle in pleasant confusion : the blare of the conch,

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10. *Kalittokai* Verses 59 & 80. *Ainkurunuru,* Verse 84, *Narrinai* (Verse 22).
11. Tolkappiam, Porulathikaram, Sutra 461. Commentary.
12. *The Pingala Nigantu.* Sutra 1369.

    ஐந்தின் முதலா வொன்பதின் காறும்
    ஐங்கணைக் கிழவனை யார்வமொடு நோற்றலும்
    பனிநீர் தோய்தலும் பாவை யாடலும் -

12. See lines quoted on previous page.

the clatter of the big drum, and the notes of the singers of benediction to God.[13]

KERALA PRACTICE, A RELIC OF DEVI VRATA.

For some reason or other, the fast sacred to Devi has gone out of use in the Tamil country, leaving only the fragrance of its memory in two most moving poems chanted as a religious duty in the festival season. It has, however, survived in the West Coast in the worship of Bhagavati as mentioned earlier, but the present day observances are wrongly associated in popular tradition, with *Kama Deva*. The festival of *Kama* is known in all India as Holi and comes off in Masi–Panguni and should not be confused with *Katyayani Vrata* of Dhanu. Also, *Sri Andal*, the author of the Tiruppavai, knowing full well that the fast mentioned in that poem is different from the festival of Kama, devotes a separate set of stanzas[14] for propitiating God to grant Sri Krishna unto her.

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13. The stanzas supporting these ideas are found in the *Tiruppavai:*

> "வையத்து வாழ்வீர்காள் நாமுநம் பாவைக்குச்
> செய்யுங் கிரிசைகள் கேளீரோ பாற்கடலுட்
> பையத் துயின்ற பரம னடிபாடி
> நெய்யுண்ணோம் பாலுண்ணோம் நாட்காலே நீராடி
> மையிட் டெழுதோம் மலரிட்டு நாமுடியோம்
> செய்யா தனசெய்யோம் தீக்குறளை சென்றோதோம்
> ஐயமும் பிச்சையு மாந்தனையுங் கைகாட்டி
> உய்யுமா றெண்ணி யுகந்தேலோ ரெம்பாவாய்"
> "மாலே மணிவண்ணா மார்கழிநீ ராடுவான்
> மேலையார் செய்வனகள் வேண்டுவன கேட்டியேல்
> ஞாலத்தை யெல்லாம் நடுங்க முரல்வன
> பாலன்ன வண்ணத்துன் பாஞ்ச சனியமே
> போல்வன சங்கங்கள் போய்ப்பா டுடையனவே
> சாலப் பெரும்பறையே பல்லாண் டிசைப்பாரே
> கோல விளக்கே கொடியே விதானமே
> ஆலி னிலையா யருளேலோ ரெம்பாவாய்".

14. These begin with the stanza "தையொரு திங்களும்" etc. and expressly address *Kamadeva*..

The similarities between the observances enshrined in the *Tiruppavai* and the *Tiruvempavai* and those of Kerala today are unmistakable. *Manikkavacagar's* words, describing the women observing the fast as "plunging into the deep waters of the lake and pressing them while singing the praises of " His feet"[15] (Thudichu Kuli) put us in mind of the habit of Kerala women singing to the tune of a self-created noise of water. The festival in Malabar is specially observed by little maids even as only little girls are called forth in the poems of *Andal* and *Manikkavacagar*. Further, dinner with a sweet preparation *(payasam)* rounds off the fast in Kerala even as the reward of the thirty days' vrata of the *Tiruppavai* is sweet cooked rice (akkaradalai).[16] It is also a fact worthy of note that the Chola King *Raja Raja* the Great, has made an endowment for the preparation of sweet rice on *Tiruvadirai* day.[17]

Thus, the joyous occasion of Tiruvadirai, remarkable as it is, for propitiating Bhagavati (Devi) to enrich the land and bless the maidens with good husbands, in the month of Margali (Dhanu), is certainly an independent survival, on the West Coast, of certain obsolete practices, used as a literary convention in the *Tiruppavai* and *Tiruvempavai*. Going further back into history, the Bhagavatam and Sangam literature, as quoted earlier, supply us with fuller details and original links of the missing chain.

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15. "மொய்யார் தடம் பொய்கை புக்கு முகேரென்னக்
கையாற் குடைந்து குடைந்துன் கழல்பாடி" and again,
"பொங்கு மடுவிற் புகப்பாய்ந்து பாய்ந்துநம்
சங்கஞ் சிலம்பச் சிலம்பு கலந்தார்ப்பக்
கொங்கைகள் பொங்கக் குடையும் புனல்பொங்கப்
பங்கயப் பூம்புன லாடேலோ ரெம்பாவாய்"
16. This "akkaradalai" has now been changed into a different preparation and is known as "Thiruvatiraikkali"
17. Vide Inscription No. 68 of Madras Epigraphical Report, 1914

3. MEENA BHARANI—ITS LITERARY BACKGROUND

TALA BALI

In propitiation of Devi, festivals are conducted in Kerala in the Bhagavati temple at Shertalai, Sarkara and Cranganore on the Bharani day in the month of Meenom. The following account of the festival at Shertallai appears in the Travancore State Manual by Sri V. Nagam Aiya :†

The *Utsavum* is celeberated every year in Meenom and last for eight days. The three previous days to the *Kodiyettu* are concerned with what are called *Thalapoli.* This means that offerings consisting of rice or paddy and flowers of the areca palm are placed in pans with a small light in the middle and the pans are carried by females, (one from each house in the kara) of all ages arrayed in their best robes and riches and jewels. A male member with an *ashtamangalyam* and light in hand, leads the line and a huge concourse of males with Arpu and females with *kurava* cries accompany them. The procession reaching the temple, they go round it five times and emptying the contents of the *thala* on a mat spread at the eastern gate of the temple, the females retire hurriedly so as to give time to the males who then begin their procession singing all sorts of voluptuous and obscene songs.

The *Thalapoli* over, the sacred flag is hoisted on the fourth day of the Utsavam ceremonies. The real festivities

† Pp 90-1 of Chapter VIII of Vol II.

commence from the fifth day (Ayiliam star) when what are known as kettukazhachas are arranged in their proper places. They comprise several stalwart figures with rudely fashioned moustaches and big staring eyes seated on wheeled dais, holding tremendous clubs in their hands called the *Bhimans* and the symbolic representations of the Puranic scenes mounted on *chakatams* or four-wheeled chariots which are drawn from one place to another. On the night, a procession is formed called *Ghoshayatra* of the northern *karakars* from near the bazaar to the temple, accompanied by the beating of drums, the clash of cymbals, and the blowing of horns and pipes, singing and dancing. Then..........begins what is known as *Padayani* or torch-light dance with more than a thousand lighted torches held in their hands. The karakars begin the dance frantically with the beat of drums, tappus, etc. and singing indecent songs. This is brought to a close by a pyrotechnic display. This *Padayani* is a mock-fight kept up to commemorate the heroic deeds of the goddess against a host of Asuras."

BHARANI, SACRED TO DURGA.

What is the origin of these observances and show of mock-battle? Why should it be conducted on Bharani day? The practice in Tamil Nad throws no light on this point, as the observances in honour of Durga in this region are different and are celebrated generally under a different asterism–the Purva Phalguni or Puram in the month of Mithunam (Ani).

Tamil literature, however, comes to our aid where the study of customs fails to give enlightenment. The commentary of *Perasiriyar* to the Tolkappiam states that the day of the asterism Bharani is sacred to Devi, (otherwise called

Korravai)[1] Delicious food was offered to the Goddess and a special kind of dance called the *tunangai* characterized the occasion. Based on these practices, a type of poetry entitled the *Parani* arose.

ACTS OF SELF SACRIFICE.

The Parani poems describe a type of self-sacrifice undertaken in those days for the attainment of deeply cherished desires. The *Kalingattupparani*–the best poem of its class–tells us of an unimaginable piece of self-immolation.[2] "Lo! at the sacrificial altar, heroes back down their heads along with their necks and put these in the hands of the goddess. The cut-off heads utter praise of Devi, while the headless trunks bend in adoration of her." This self-sacrifice is not a mere poetical exaggeration, but did often happen in the worship of Devi. The Tolkappiam tells us of the prevalence of this sacrifice.[3] Sculptures and paintings have been noticed by epigraphists in various places, confirming this practice of 'decapitation' in Trichiropoly, Palnad (Guntur district), and Mallam (Nellore district). They are also known to occur in the Kannada Desa. The Madras Epigraphical report of 1938 has several inscriptions of Tirukoyilur taluk of South Arcot district where a certain *parani nonpu* is said to have been observed by women. The inscriptions are on crudely dressed slabs, in Tamil characters, assignable to the 10th and 11th centuries A. D. It is noteworthy that one inscription of 1937–38 of the same taluk

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1. "காடுகெழு செல்விக்குப் பரணிநாட் கூழும் துணங்கையும் கொடுத்து வழிபடுவதோர் வழக்கு" (தொல், செய், 149, நச்).
2. அடிக்கழுத்தி னுடன்சிரத்தை அரிவராலோ
   அரிந்தசிரம் அணங்கின்கைக் கொடுப்பராலோ
   கொடுத்தசிரம் கொற்றவையைப் பரவுமாலோ
   குறையுடலம் கும்பிட்டு நிற்குமாலோ. (Verse III)
3. Vide Tolkappiam—Porulatikaram—Purattinai Iyal.

states specifically that the vow was performed in a Durga temple. The Report states :[4]

"Such records are peculiar to this locality and period and have not been met with anywhere else in the Tamil districts. It may be presumed that these slabs had been set up to serve as memorials for some vow, possibly of self-immolation by fasting or otherwise, observed by the ladies, mentioned in the records. In two instances, these are specifically stated to be Brahman ladies with the names of their husbands mentioned...........

"Attention may here be drawn to a Bengali custom mentioned in Rajendralal Mitra's "Indo-Aryans." (Quoted in the Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society, Vol. XXIX—p. 505) according to which Hindu women shed a few drops of their own blood from between their breasts as an act of propitiation of the goddess Durga in fulfilment of a vow made for the recovery of a patient. This seems to be merely a symbolic act of self-sacrifice practised in earlier times. It is possible that the *nonpu* referred to in the present epigraphs might have been of a similar nature and it did not involve actual loss of life."

PICTURES OF OBSERVANCES IN POEMS.

It is thus elear that there were certain followers of Devi, men and women who, in the fullness of their hearts, willingly offered their limbs and even their heads to their deity. Parani poems celebrate this extreme self-sacrifice; they also describe other devotees of Devi—goblins. These goblins resort to a battle-field and having their fill of corpses, sing the praise of the hero who gave them sumptuous food. On the analogy of the convention of offering food and dance

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4. Madras Epigraphical Report of 1938.; No. 458 to 461

to the goddess on this day, the goblins are described by the poets to offer food, cooked from the lifeless trunks of the battle-field to Devi and dance gleefully their devil–dances. A picture of the actual fight is given in the concluding portion of the poems where the dancers thank the hero of the battle.

TALAPPOLI, A RELIC OF BHARANI OBSERVANCES IN TAMIL LITERATURE AND EPIGRAPHY.

It is a matter for investigation whether the observances associated with Bharani in Malabar are really relics of the practices immortalized in Tamil literature and confirmed by epigraphical surveys. The resemblances between these two festivities are striking. Pictures of huge uncouth figures are taken out at Shertallai and other places reminding us of the goblins gathering on Bharani day in Tamil poems. Goblins form an integral part of Devi's retinue whenever she sallies out. *Ghoshayatra* and *Padayani* indicate the march to and array on the battle-field, while the term *Arpu* gives us a pleasant surprise, being the very word used in Sangam literature for the victorious war-cries[5] The fact that the festival is begun by women is very important. Parani poems in Tamil begin with an invitation to women to commence the songs;[6] it is thus evidently a matter of good form, for women to initiate festivals: The Indra festival of the *Silappatikaram* is, for instance, begun by women who sing the *kuravai* dance[7] *Talappoli* is perhaps only a corrupted form of the

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5. 'வென்றிகொள் வீரர் ஆர்ப்பினும் பெரிதே' (அகநா. 36)
'பகைத்தலைச் சென்று ...ஆர்ப்பிமிழ' (மதுரைக்காஞ்சி, 181–2)
6. The invitation is called "கடைதிறப்பு"
7. காவற் பூதத்துக் கடைகெழு பீடிகை
புழுக்கலும் நோலையும் விழுக்குடை மடையும்
பூவும் புகையும் பொங்கலும் சொரிந்து
துணங்கையர் குரவையர் அணங்கெழுந் தாடி
Pukarkkandam–chapter 5, lines 67–70

Tamil word *Talaippali*, (தலைப்பலி) the name for the act of decapitation described in the Parani poems. Presumably, the custom of placing offerings on a plate arose out of the mistaken etymology of the corrupted form, *Talabali* as "offerings on a *tala* or plate." This must have occurred at a time when the history of the festival was completely forgotten.

In view of the similarities noted by me, I have thought it fit to correlate the Bharani observances of Kerala with those in Tamil literature and epigraphy. Having regard to the fact that Kerala is the repository of many customs and usages extinct in Tamil Nad, it is quite probable that the present-day practice on the West Coast is a relic of observances preserved in Tamil poems.

4. THE ARAT AND TAMIL LITERATURE

Among the most impressive festivities of Travancore, the Arat takes a pre-eminent place. The chief feature of this festival is the ceremonial procession in which God Padmanabha goes down to the seaside for refreshing himself after the ardours of a long ritual. Twice a year, in March-April and October-November, Trivandrum is full of the hum of people gathered to witness the pageantry of this unique procession.

HOLY BATH.

Arat is, literally, bathing in the water of a river. The purpose of this bath is obviously purificatory, and it takes place at the conclusion of the Brahmotsavam, the most important annual festival in every temple in South India. In shrines like Srirangam, Darbhasayanam and Mylapore, the *teerthavari* or *teertham kodukkirathu* (தீர்த்தங்கொடுக்கிறது) celebration is only another name for the Arat. A major festival is usually regarded as similar to a vedic sacrifice, and the concluding holy bath may be said to resemble the *Avabhrta-snana*, the bath rounding off a sacrifice. Most often, these holy baths took place on picturesque river-banks, so that even in the comparatively few cases where the ceremony happened to be conducted on the seashore, and might appropriately be called *Kadalattu* (bathing in the sea), the original name, Arat (bathing in the river) has stuck on to it.

THE PROCESSION.

For sheer magnificence and holy inspiration, the Arat procession may compare only with the Dasara procession in Mysore. Massed formations of cavalry and infantry escort the deity on both sides with richly caparisoned

elephants leading the procession. The Maharaja walks in the centre, immediately before the deity, as a personal body-guard, with a flashing sword in his arm and followed by the Elaya Raja, the Dewan and other high Hindu officers of the State. Almost all the people of Travancore range themselves on either side of the route and rally on the beach in the mellow rays of the setting sun to witness this picturesque event. Strange chords are aroused in our emotional being; here is a truly blest land whose sovereign derives his very right to rule it from the great God above, priding himself as "the servant of Lord Padmanabha."

LITERARY BACKGROUND.

Watching the colourful procession of God Sri Padmanabha, my mind ran back to the literary background of the Arat. A whole chapter is devoted to the description of the concluding sea-bath of Indra's festival, in the celebrated Silappatikaram, the epic story of Kovalan and Kannaki in Tamil literature. What give us a pleasant surprise are however, the pages of the Patirruppattu, an anthology of ten groups of stanzas, each group in turn consisting of ten verses, sung in honour of Chera Kings of old. This collection is a classic, of the Sangam Age of Tamil literature, a mine of information on the Kerala country and on its kings in the early centuries of the Christian era. The fourth decad of the anthology is devoted by the poet Kappiyarruk-kappiyanar to the praise of the King, Kalankaikkanni Narmudicceral. We learn that this King suffered reverses in his early life, and had to crown himself with a garland of Kalankai flowers for want of his royal diadem, seized by his enemies. But soon the tide turned in his favour, and our poet sings the prowess of his arms.

A translation of the appropriate lines[1] in the fourth decad of the poem (stanza 31) is given below: " Clothed by the seas, and dotted with hills lies this part of the earth (the Chera country): here, the voice of multitudes of men lifting their hands and saying prayers, fills the air in all directions. As the worship of Lord Vishnu begins, the officiating priests ring their bells which send clear peals afar. At this sign, the eager, fasting multitude bathes in the cold waters of the sea[2] and a bustling noise fills the air. The purificatory bath over, people go to pray their obeisance to the great Lord who wears garlands rich with the hum of bees on his bosom, besides the Goddess Lakshmi. Ever and anon, the great chakra of the Lord (Vishnu) dazzles everybody with its

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1. The poem runs as follows :—

குன்றுதலை மணந்து குழூஉக்கட லுடுத்த
மண்கெழு ஞாலத்து மாந்த ரொராங்குக்
கைசுமந் தலறும் பூசன் மாதிரத்து
நால்வேறு நனந்தலை யொருங்கெழுந் தொலிப்பத்
தெள்ளுயர் வடிமணி யெறியுநர் கல்லென
உண்ணாப் பைஞ்ஞிலம் பனித்துறை மண்ணி
வண்டூது பொலிதார்த் திருஞெம ரகலத்துச்
கண்பொரு திகிரிக் கமழ்குரற் றுழாஅய்
அலங்கற் செல்வன் சேவடி பரவி
நெஞ்சுமலி யுவகையர் துஞ்சுபதிப் பெயர
மணிநிற மையிரு ளகல நிலாவிரிபு
கோடுகூடு மதிய மியலுற் றாங்குத்
துளங்குகுடி விழுத்திணை திருத்தி முரசுகொண்
டாண்கட னிறுத்தநின் பூண்கிளர் வியன்மார்பு
........................விறல் வரையற்றே.

" குன்று தலைமணந்து etc " reminds us of *Kadal-malainadu* called in *Patirruppattu 15* again as " கடலவும் கல்லவும்.........நாடு"

2. The word பனித்துறை is used with reference to the sea very often. The following illustrations may be cited :

கடலொடுழந்த பனித்துறைப் பரதவ (Patirruppattu, 48)
பனித்துறைத்தொண்டி (Aingurunuru 172, 174)
பனிபடுதுறை (Aingurunuru, 141).

brilliance. Presently, having prayed to the Lord of the fragrant clusters of *tulasi* garlands, the crowds go home, full of satisfaction in their hearts. As though to gladden these multitudes on their way home, the full-orbed moon[3] rises, dispelling the black darkness of the scene. Even as the benefaction of the moon, O Chera King, you come to the aid of suffering men of high estate and rule valorously."

TRIBUTE TO PATRON DEITY.

It is clear that the description here relates to devotees bathing in the sea and having *darshan* of the god who has himself come down to the beach for the occasion. We have, in these lines, a glimpse, though very fitful it is, of the Arat festival as obtained in the Sangam Age. The old commentator of the Patirruppattu (whose identity is not known) states specifically that the god mentioned in the stanza is none other than the Vishnu[4] of Tiru-anantapuram (Trivandrum). The festivities took place on a full-moon night; further, the King must have taken the lead in the festivity, for it is stated that his benefactions pleased all, even as the full-moon shed its welcome lustre on the auspicious occasion.

We have thus satisfactory proof that the Arat festival dates back to a remote past. In those early years of history, too, God Padmanabha went down to the sea for His ceremonial bath, and both the ruler and the ruled rejoiced in this many-sided beauty. Well may we imagine that through the vistas of the ages, the kings of the immortal line of Travancore zealously fostered the Arat as their personal tribute to their patron deity, the fountainhead of all their glory and power.

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3. கோடுகூடுமதியம் means the moon with its orbs joined together i. e. full moon, as opposed to கோடுவாய்கூடாப்பிறை (Kalittokai, 142), the cresent whose orbs do not meet. As the full-moon is mentioned, probably the *Arat* of Meenam (Panguni) seems to be referred to here.

4. "செல்வனென்றது, திருவனந்தபுரத்துத் திருமாலை" (Commentary to line 9).

5. BIRTHDAY FESTIVITIES OF CERA KINGS

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS IN TRIVANDRUM

Each year, the celebrations connected with the birthday of Kerala Kings of Travancore and Cochin usher in a period of absolute rejoicing. In Trivandrum one sees unforgettable sights. There is the pageantry of the State Forces—lancers, horsemen and infantry—marching before His Highness going in procession, seated on his palanquin, to the temple of his Patron God Sri Padmanabha. A birthday durbar is held; special reforms and concessions to the people are announced. The poor are fed free; dances and songs proclaim jollity everywhere. It is a happy time when people feel elated and proud.

REFERENCE IN TOLKAPPIAM

The celebration on the birthday by South Indian Maharajahs dates back to the pre-Christian era. The *Tolkappiam*[1], the earliest Tamil classic extant, enumerates as one of the types of objective poetry the description of the birthday, the great day when all thoughts of malice and hatred are banished from the heart. The commentator *Nacchinarkkiniar* cites imprisonment, warfare, execution, etc., as examples of the hatred of kings that should be banished from the heart. Good deeds appropriate to the occasion are: amnesty to prisoners, cessation of war and punishment,

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1. Porulatikaram–Purattinai-iyal, Sutra 91
("நாளணி செற்ற நீக்கிப் பிறந்த நாள்வயிற் பெருமங்கலமும்"
Also Purapporulvenba-malai, 9, 24; "அறந்தருசெங்கோ லருள்வெய்யோன், பிறந்தநாட் சிறப்புரைத்தன்று."

concession in taxation besides doing acts of charity. The birthday is called *vellani-nal*[2] the day of white-dress. White dress is worn on this day, indicative of love and mercy to all souls. The commentator also points to the old custom for drummers of the kingdom to invite folk to join in the festivities by sounding their drumbeats.

SONGS ON THE BIRTHDAY IN ANCIENT ANTHOLOGIES

The celebration of the birthday was not confined to the three major kings of the Tamil land; *Velirs* and chieftains of the country, also, made it an important festival. The *Muttollayiram* and other anthologies contain many songs in honour of this occasion.

"The voice of the beneficent drum sounds forth: Be happy, Oh Kings, for the doors (that confined you) will be open; go to bed and enjoy yourselves as you desire. It is the day of *Sadayam*, the birth star of the *Kotai* the Cera king."[3]

"Oh you hostile kings, open your wide doors, harness not your elephants and chariot horses with their beautiful gallop. This is the day of *Uttiradam* of the valorous Pandya; he will have nothing of war."[4]

"On the *Revati* day of our lord *Killi* with the shining leaflike lance, holy Brahmanas gained presents of cows and gold. Poets rode upon elephants high as the *Meru* mountain."[5]

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2. "அரசன் நாடோறும் தான் கைக்கொள்ளுகின்ற சிறை செய்தல், செருச்செய்தல், கொலைபுரிதல் முதலிய செறுதற்றொழில்களை இந் நாளில் கைவிட்டு மங்கலவண்ணமாகிய வெள்ளணியணிந்து எல்லா உயிர்க்கண்ணும் அருளை நிகழ்த்தலின் வெள்ளணி என்பர்"

3. Peruntokai, stanza 567. The lines imply that imprisoned enemy kings are let out on the sacred day.

4. *Ibid*, stanza 568.

5. *Ibid*, stanza 569.

A SPECIAL CELEBRATION OF THE CERAS

The birthday of the Ceras seems to have been an occasion of greater festivity than that of the other two monarchs of the Tamil country. The celebration was so impressive that *Mangudi Marudanar*, the poet of the *Maduraikkanji* singing the praises of the Pandya king *Neduncеliyan*, goes out of the way to cite it in a simile as typical of a mighty festival.

"Like the hum of the gathering of great men assembled in the audience-hall, on the birthday of the King of the land of the seas, the Cera of bright garlands."[6]

The Cera Kings must therefore have celebrated the occasion with lectures and debates of learned men, and special feasts worthy of the great day. The Kings of Kerala have indeed been renowned for their *dharma*, their tireless charity, from time out of mind. An oft-quoted song of the *Purananuru* sings of the *Perumcorru–Udiyan–Ceraladan*, the Cera King literally, "great in feeding." The tradition is that he fed the *Pandava and Kaurava* forces in the Mahabharata War. Another song[7] mentions the proverbial oven of the *Udiyan*, ever busy in its task of hospitality. In Chapter 27 of the *Silappadikaram* King *Senguttuvan* is described as hurrying back from his northern tour to his capital town[8] for this important occasion. The 28th

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6. (lines 524-6.)
தண்கட னாடனொண்பூங் கோதை
பெருநா ளிருக்கை விழுமியோர் குழீஇ
விழைவுகொள் கம்பலை கடுப்ப.........

7 "உதியன் அட்டில் போல" (Akam 168)

8. Ls, 226–229; 'குடவர் கோமான் வந்தான் நாளை......வெள் ளணியாம்;

The ploughmen sing of the arrival of the Cera King from the north, just in time for the celebration of the birthday.

chapter of the Manimekalai touches on the birthday celebrations.[9] Another casual reference in the Silappatikāram in chapter 27[10] underlines the fact that *dharma*, the bestowal of gifts on fit persons, was a chief feature of the birthday function.

A DAY OF WHITE

The Tamil Classics thus help us to reconstruct a vivid picture of the King's birthday in the hoary past. It was a sacred time of retrospect when the King paused to reflect and to humanise his administration. To one steeped in associations of Tamil literature, the birthday of the Maharaja of Travancore is in effect the birthday of the ancient Ceras come again. As of old, the white dress chosen for the occasion symbolises the purity and benignity of the Sovereign. Nay, we have to go a step further. *White* is the permanent state-dress of Travancore,[11] symbolising that the king is for ever ready to forget and forgive, and to shower his choicest blessings on the kingdom he governs.

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9. Çhap. 28, Ls. 9—10. 'புவிகாவலன்றன் புண்ணிய நன்னாள்'.

10. "பெருநாள் அமையம் பிறக்கிடக் கொடுத்து" Line. 44.

11. One is reminded of the happy praise of the poet Jayamkondar in another context,

"எற்றைப் பகலினும் வெள்ளணிநாள் இருநிலப் பாவை தனை நிழற்றுங், கொற்றக் குடையினைப் பாடீரே" (Kalingattup-parani, verse 533.)

The poet calls on singers of his tribe to sing of the valour of the white royal umbrella for ever establishing days like the glorious birthday, on this earth.

6 THE WORSHIP OF SASTA

SASTA THE POPULAR TUTELARY DEITY

The worship of Sasta or Ayyappan is universal in Kerala. It has grown in strength and, today, several lakhs of pilgrims go to his shrine at Sabari Malai. It is generally agreed that Ayyappan of the West Coast is identical with Ayyanar of the Tamil Nad. In both parts of South India he is believed to watch over the countryside. He is definitely a post-Vedic deity, though tradition says that he is born of Vishnu and Siva. Without launching into discussions about the identity and origin of Sasta, we will consider here the light that Tamil literature throws on this deity.

SASTA'S NAMES AND PARAPHERNALIA

In the ancient Pinkala Nighantu, [1] (circa 10th century A. D.), several names of Sasta are listed, and these are highly informative. He is called Satavahanan[2], Kolikkodiyon. Sattan, Vellaiyanai vahanan, Kari, Chendayutan, Kadalniravannan, Puranai-kelvan, Putkalai-manalan, Aryan, Arattaikkappon, Yogi and Hariharaputtiran.[3] From these names

1. Chapter II. வான்வர்வகை-Sutras 117 & 118—" சாதவாகனன், கோழிக் கொடியோன்—சாத்தன், வெள்ளையானை வாகனன்—காரி, செண்டாயுதன், கடல்நிறவண்ணன்—பூரணை கேள்வன், புட்கலை மணாளன்—ஆரியன், அறத்தைக் காப்போன், யோகி—அரிகரபுத்திரன், ஐயன் பெயரே."

" காரியூர்தி கோழிக்கொடியே."

2. Skt. Satavahana.

3. 'சாத்தனை மகனா வைத்தார்'—அப்பர் தேவாரம். பக். 653, பாட்டு 4. (சாமிநாத பண்டிதர் பதிப்பு)

we gather that he had the figure of a cock in his special banner. His consorts were Puranai and Pushkalai. He rode on a white elephant and a black horse[4]. His colour was blue like that of the sea; he was a guardian of Dharma and a yogi. His chief weapon was the *chendu*, a whip-like instrument, for driving horses. In this connection, it is noteworthy that one of the ancient Cholas — Karikalan — is stated to have been favoured by Sasta with his *chendu*[5] with which he caused the Himalayas to whirl. (i.e. conquered it). The favourite garland of the god was made of Kurinji[6] flowers which belong in a peculiar sense to the mountains.

SASTA, AN EXPONENT OF THE SHASTRAS

Sasta is called Pashanda Sattan[7] and Pashandan[8]. This epithet is explained by Adiyarkkunallar, the comment-

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4. In the temples of Sasta, elephants and horses of his train are prominently displayed. The following illustration from the Tamil Grammar may be cited in support of the above.

“பவளக்கோட்டு நீலயானை சாதவாகனன் கோயிலுள்ளும் இல்லை.”

(Tolkappiam, Colladikaram, 34–Senavaraiyar's Commentary.)

5. கச்சி வளைக்கைச்சி காமக்கோட் டங்காவல்
மெச்சி யினிதிருக்கு மெய்ச்சாத்தன்—கைச்செண்டு
கம்பக் களிற்றுக் கரிகாற் பெருவளத்தான்
செம்பொற் கிரிதிரித்த செண்டு.

(Adiyarkkunallar's commentary, Silappadikaram, Chapter 5, lines 95–98.)

6. செங்குறிஞ்சித் தாரார் நறுமாலைச் சாத்தற்குத் தான்பின்னும் நேராதன வொன்று நேர்ந்தாள். (Siriya Tirumadal; [Couplet 16–17].)

7. Silappadikaram. Chapter 9, Line 15.

8. Ibid, Chap; 30. Ls. 69, 78.

ator of Silappadikaram as one learned in the ninety-six Shastras falling outside orthodox religion.[9]

There are many links between Sasta and the Chera country and one such special link is seen in the Periyapuranam, of Sekkilar. In this book,[10] we read that when Cheraman Perumal and Sundaramurti Nayanar went to Kailasa, the Kerala King recited his poem, the Adiyula, in Lord Siva's presence. The Great One was highly pleased with the devotion and genius of the Chera King and made him a Gananatha. Mahasasta who heard the poem at Kailasa kept it in his mind and made it known for the benefit of the world at large, in Thiruppidavur. Mahasasta is thus responsible for a signal act of service to Tamil literature as well as the Chera country. This is in keeping with his unique scholarship in all the arts.

THE GOD'S TEMPLES OUTSIDE THE LIMITS OF VILLAGES AND TOWNS

Ilango Adigal, in the Silappadikaram, speaks of a temple to Sasta in Kavirippum-pattinam[11]. He mentions it along with other shrines dedicated to Subramanya, Indra, etc. This would suggest that he was deemed as equal to the other deities of the Aryan pantheon. The fact that he is specially called Arya (or Ayyan which is only a variant of the Sanskrit word) would point to the same conclusion. Sasta is mentioned as Puram-panaiyan, one who lived outside the limits of

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9. Elsewhere in the Silappadikaram, Court-jesters are required to be proficient in these Shastras to amuse people (Chapter 26 lines 30-1). The Prahasana-natakas bear witness to this. The Buddhist traveller Fa-Hien (circa fourth century A. D.) speaks of a place east of Jetavana where the Buddha "held a discussion with the advocates of the ninety-six schemes of erroneous doctrine." (A Record of Buddhistic kingdoms—by Fa-Hien Translated by James Legge, Page 59-60).

10. Vide—Cheraman Perumal-Nayanar Puranam.

11. "வேற்கோட்டம், வச்சிரக் கோட்டம், புறம்பணையான் வாழ்கோட்டம்" (Chapter 9, Lines, 11-14.)

the city. We may note that even today, the Ayyanar temples of Tamil Nad are located outside village and towns. This is probably due to the fact that he is guardian deity entrusted with the care of the areas in which his shrine is situated.

SASTA WORSHIP BY BRAHMANAS

Today, the Ayyanar of Tamil Nad is primarily a deity worshipped by sects other than orthodox Brahmins. The temple priests mostly come from among the potters[12] (Kuyavar). This may probably be due to the fact that animal sacrifices are offered in this temple — a practice which seems to be of later origin. But in the past, he was the adored god of the Brahmanas as of other castes. The Silappadikaram tells us that Madalan, learned in Vedic lore, paid his respects to this god. Sasta himself was born in a Brahmana family, and married a maid of that community, according to the account of Ilango Adigal.[13] In the days of the Alwars and the Nayanars, too, offerings to Sasta by high and low for the achievement of certain desired objects was a common feature.[14] Most striking of all, is the testimony of epigraphy. In the 1922 collection of the Madras Epigraphical[15] Department, several inscriptions of Agaram or Kayirur village in Villupuram taluk say that the Mahasasta of the place was called Paramaswamigal; the deity was worshipped and looked after by Brahmanas leading a pure life of consecrated service.

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12 Sangam literature bears testimony to the employment of potters as temple priests (Vide Narrinai, 200-203.)

13. Chapters 9 & 30 of Silappadikaram.

14. Vide foot-note No. 6.

15. M. E. R. 368 to 388 of 1922.

THE STORY OF SASTA IN SILAPPATIKARAM

In the epic of Silappatikaram is found a fascinating account of the life of Sasta as a human being. This story is told at length in chapter 9 and is again summarized in chapter 30, when King Senguttuvan asks the revered Madalan why the God chose Devandi as his "medium." The story runs as follows:—

Malati, a Brahmana woman out of overflowing love, suckled her co-wife's child during the latter's absence. But as ill-luck would have it, the child died. Fearing the wrath of the jealous co-wife, Malati went with the dead child to the deities of all temples, praying to them to resurrect the child and save her. On her way, one mischievous goblin snatched even the corpse in her hands and ate it away. In helpless surrender, the woman fell at the feet of Sasta for rescuing her from blame. Taking pity on her, the god assumed the shape of her co-wife's child. Thus appearing on earth in the Brahmana family of Kappiyakkudi,[16] he mastered all the arts as a Brahmachari, and married Devandi, a Brahmana maid. He led the householder's life with her for eight years. After the death of his parents, he took care to conserve the property of the family and also duly performed the prescribed rites for the departed souls. His task being thus over, he showed his true self to his wife one day and vanished into his temple, asking her to come to his shrine. From that time forth, Devandi spent her life in austerities and worship of her lord.

LEGEND OF SASTA SIMILAR TO THE STORY OF THE SILAPPATIKARAM

Tradition and legend in Kerala have woven a beautiful story around the personality of the popular Ayyappan. He

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16. Kappiyakkudi is Kapya-gotra, to which Tholkappiyanar, Kappiyarrukkappiyanar, Vellurkappiyanar and other famous poets belong.

is believed to have been found in a forest as a baby by the childless King of Pandalam. After growing up to manhood, he fulfilled a son's obligations to his parents. A brother was born to him and a difficulty developed as to his getting the crown. The queen mother became jealous of the founding; but the divine boy showered his grace on the family. He performed some wonders and, leaving the throne for the second born, vanished suddenly, inviting his parents to his abode—Sabarimalai. This well-known story is similar in essentials to the account of the Silappatikaram and both may have a common source. The two accounts emphasise the fundamental beliefs that, for some avowed object, the god was born on earth, and that, after the fulfilment of this object, he went back to his usual residence of the celestial world.

ANOTHER REFERENCE IN SILAPPATIKARAM

After his departure from Devandi, Sasta makes his appearance in the form of a Brahmin before Madalan while the latter was in the temple of Mangala Devi. Sasta gave him a small vessel containing sacred water and asked him to keep the water safe. Then he went away.

During the installation of Kannaki Devi, when Madalan, Senguttuvan and others were present in the temple, Sasta appeared again on Devandi and explained to Madalan about the sacred qualities of the water, which he had left with him before. If sprinkled on persons, he said, it would enable them to remember their past births. Sasta further asked him to sprinkle the water over the twin girls born to the wife of Arattanchetti and also over the daughter of Sedakkudumbi engaged in the services of God Vishnu in Adakamadam. When Madalan did so, the three children knew their previous births and

began to sob. Of the three children, one was the mother of Kannaki, another the mother of Kovalan and the third *Madavi*, the cowherdess of Madura.

All these instances make it evident that Sasta was revered as a divine benefactor to the people in distress as early as the Sangam period.

A YOGI, AND PROTECTOR OF DHARMA

Sasta, besides being an exponent of the Pashanda-shastras,[17] is a yogi, as one of his names signifies. At Sabarimalai, too, amidst the loneliness of the hills and forests, he sits in Yogasana pose. As protector of Dharma, (Aramkappon), he is keeping watch over the Dharmarajya (Travancore) at the request of Parasurama.[18]

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17. "பாசண்ட விகற்பமும் இவற்றுட் பலவாம், பேசின் தொண்ணூற் றறுவகைப் படுமே"—திவாகரம்.

18. There is no evidence either in Tamil literature, inscription or tradition in support of the belief that Sasta had his origin from Buddhistic sources.

7. SAKKAIK-KUTTAR.

SAKKIYAR, TEMPLE DANCERS OF TODAY

Sakkai-kuttu is the name of a very popular dance which takes place today in temples during festival seasons. With a curious dress falling in many folds round the waist, the dancers of this *kuttu* excel in reciting slokas from the Puranas, and dramatizing them. Complete licence is given to them to jest and joke; they are masters in the art of tickling their audiences into uproarious laughter.[1]

A SAKKIYAR'S DANCE IN SILAPPATIKARAM

The Sakkai dance has a remarkable history. Tamil literature and inscriptions bear testimony to its vogue from very early times. Silappatikaram, a veritable storehouse of information on Tamil customs and manners, tells us that the Cera King, Senguttuvan, after his victories in the north, delighted himself in the company of his queen, Ilango-Venmal, in the theatre-hall, witnessing a beautiful dance-play by a Kutta-Sakkaiyan of Paraiyur.[2] This dance is vividly described in the followiug manner:

"As the performer danced, the anklets on his feet made noise; the little drum in his fair, excited hands sounded forth; the eyes gave expression to a thousand suggestions; the hair flunk about, as though washing the very directions. Yet the *padaka* and the *sudaka*

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1. Vide Sri T. K. Gopala Panikker's *Malabar and its Folk* Sakkiyar Kuttu.

2. Silappatikaram–Chapter 28 Ls. 67–77.

ornaments of the woman which the dancer bore on one side of him, shook not; there was not a stir of the waist-girdle or the soft breasts. The earlobes and beautiful tresses of hair moved not. Thus making violent movements and yet keeping his feminine partner steady and unshaken, even as Lord Śiva danced with Uma as one-half of his own self, the Kutta-Sakkaiyan of Paraiyūr (where men learned four divisions of the Vedas lived) danced the *Kotticcedam* dance."

The *Kotticcedam* is also called *Kotti* or *Kodukotti*, and is said to have taken place out of Siva's joy at the burning of Tripuram, the abode of the Asuras. This is one of the eleven dances mentioned in Tamil literature. The dancing described in the poem reminds us of the present day Kathak-kali wherein also a violent movement of some parts of the body is combined with perfect steadiness of certain other parts.

It will be thus clear that the Sakkaiyars who dance and recite the Puranas in temples today, were not mere temple-dancers in the Sangam Age; they performed the best types of dances before the king and the flower of the nobility. As dancers, they held certain offices of state also. The word Sakkaiyar, is found in the *Divakaram*, one of the old Tamil lexicons, meaning the name of an official of the King.[3]

EVIDENCE OF INSCRIPTIONS: GRANTS TO SAKKAIYARS.

Not merely in the Sangam period, but also in the centuries following, epigraphs testify to the patronage and position enjoyed by the Sakkaiyars. Mention of grants of land (Sakkai-kani) to the Sakkaiyars has been made in inscriptions so as to enable them to pursue their traditional occupations to the delight of countless audiences.

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3. "வள்ளுவன் சாக்கை யெனும்பெயர் மன்னர்க்கு உள்படு கருமத் தலைவர்க் கொன்றும்".

In the reign of Parakesari Rajendra–Chola, Kumaran Srikantan, a Sakkaiyan, was given *nritya–bhogam* or *sakkaik-kani* to dance Puranic dances of six parts (No. 120 of M. E. R. 1925).

In the reign of Parakesarivarman, a person by name Alayur-sakkai was granted gold and land for the performance of three *sakkai* dances in the temple of Kila–Paluvur. (No. 250 of M. E. R. 1926).

An epigraph of Kamarasavalli in Trichiropoly district records orders to Sakkai–marayan Vikrama–Cholan for the performance of three Sakkai-kuttus during Margazhi-Tiruvatirai and three Sakkai–kuttus during Vaikhasi-Tiruvatirai before the God Tirukkarkotakisvaram–Udaiyar. (M. E. R. 1915, page 98).

The title Sakkai-marayan would imply that the performer was the head of his department. He also bore the name of the sovereign under whom he served, probably as the head of the State troups of dancers.

8. THE PANAR.

WANDERING MINSTRELS

The Panars are one of the ancient Tamil castes;[1] they were musicians *par excellence*, playing on the yazh. Kings and chieftains liberally patronised them, taking care that "these poor singers never starved."[2] Panars went about the country with their musical instruments and mixed with the people exhorting kings and commoners to do noble acts. In times of war, they were by the King's side to praise and inspire him, and as a reward for their services, they received a share of the booty of the battle. The kings also adorned them with lotus flowers made of gold and their wives with rich golden jewels.[3a]

OF LOW BIRTH, YET HIGHLY RESPECTED

In the Tamil classics Panars are stated to be of low birth.[3b] They are also called *matangar*, a sanskrit word meaning 'those who have no access to the heart or centre of the village.' Of a piece with this in Bana kavi's prose romance, Kadambari, the Matangi girl carrying a parrot to King Chandrapida, is said to be a South Indian maid. She stood at a distance from the king, and beat the ground with a bamboo stick in order to announce her arrival at the royal

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1. பாணன் பறையன் துடியன் கடம்பனென்று, இந்நான் கல்லது குடியு மில்லை. (புறநா. 335)

2. 'பாண்பசிப்பகைஞன்' (Ibid. 180)

3a. Purananuru, 11. 12.

3b. கலித்தொகை, 85, line, 22; 95, line, 10.

presence.[4] It was, in fact, the practice of the Panars, to have a small bamboo stick with them; this is clear from the references in Tamil classics like the Kuruntokai[5] and Patirruppattu.[6]

The Panars were of several sects such as Yalppanar, Isaippanar and Mandaippanar. Fishing was among their occupations, for their women are said to have sold fish for paddy.[7]

In spite of their low birth, it is noteworthy that, by virtue of their superior knowledge and musical attainments, they were respected by all sections of the community. If they went to the houses of Brahmanas, they were given delicious food[8] Kings delighted in their company and in the Patirruppattu specially the Cera monarchs are often described as "the protector of the families of Panars."[9] It was their duty to sing sweet songs in the morning at palace gates, so that the kings may wake up, 'lapped in soft lyrical airs'.[10] The Panars also acted as messengers, carrying tidings of love-quarrels and errands of reconciliation etc., between lovers of the higher castes.[11]

PANARS IN THE MIDDLE PERIOD.

After the sangam age also, the Panars carried on their services to the community with unbated vigour.

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4. Fa-Hien, the Buddhist traveller, also remarks on this custom which he observed in Central India. Vide Travels of Fa-Hien, Page 43.
5. Kuruntokai 298.
6. Patirruppattu 43, ll 27-28
7. Vide பெரும்பாண line 283-4. ஐங்குறு 47-49.
8. Vide பெரும்பாண்- lines, 301-310
9. "பாணர்புரவல"—பதிற். 65 Line 11.
10. திருச்சிற்றம்பலக்கோவை 375, பேராசிரியர் உரை.
11. Castes and Tribes of Southern India. See Panan.

It is well known that two of them, very great devotees of God—Tiruppan Alvar and Tiru Nilakanta Yazhpanar—became 'canonised' saints. In the Periyapuranam,[12] it is said that Panabhadra, another ardent Pana saint of Madura, received special favours from Siva. The story, in brief, is that Lord Siva took pity on his poor Bhakta who, regardless of his poverty, was ever singing His praises. He appeared before him in a vision and gave him a letter to Ceraman Perumal Nayanar, one of his chosen devotees. This king would give him gold and jewellery and clothes to his heart's content. Accordingly, Panabhadra reached Kodumgolur, the capital of the Ceraman, and was offered by the king not only gold and clothes but also his entire kingdom and sovereignty. Refusing to take more than his requirements, the devotee brought to his native town elephants and horses and all other precious gifts of the Ceraman. The memory of this story is still kept alive in the Madura temple by a festival. It is particularly worthy of note that this story, though Puranic in origin, links up the Panars and the Cera Kings,[13] who lived in the Sangam age, their great patrons, as we saw earlier.

SURVIVAL OF THE PANARS IN KERALA

In the Tamil Nad, the Panars do not exist today as a distinct caste following their ancient occupations. Probably, the tailors of Madura who celebrate the festival of Panabhadra above referred to and call themselves Panar, are of the old Tamil caste.

In Kerala, however, the Panars live as a recognizable caste with their old functions unchanged. Thurston, in his

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12. Vide, Ceraman-Perumal Nayanar Puranam.

13. The letter which is in verse-form is known as Thirumukappasuram. It is included in the first collection of the eleventh Thirumurai.

monumental *Castes and Tribes of S. India*, tells us that they are of four kinds:—Thiruvarangap-panan, Minpidi-panan, Kudai kattip-panan, and Pulluvan. They excel in dancing, in music and in playing on the drum. Their occupations are fishing and the making of leather instruments like the drum, etc. Present-day Panars of Kerala perform functions similar to those of their predecessors of the Sangam age; every year in the month of Karkatakam (July–August), they stand at the gates of Nayar and Brahmana houses, and sing songs to wake up the inmates. It is their duty also to convey tidings of the coming of age of Ezahava maidens to their husbands. These two functions, it is needless to say, are reminiscent of the Panars of the early classics—waking up the Tamil kings with their songs and acting as messengers between lovers.

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9. THE VELAN

THE VELAN, A FORETELLER OF EVENTS

One of the conventional situations of Tamil *Aham* poetry is concerned with the love-sickness of the lady-love and its treatment. The anxious parents of the poor love-stricken maid, not knowing the truth, seek the aid of foretellers and soothsayers. These diviners of the future are Kurava women of the hills, and the Velan.

HIS DANCES AND PREDICTIONS

The Velan was so called because he bore a *vel* or lance, the emblem of Muruga (Subrahmanya) in his hand; he was a

professional priest of the temples of this God.[1] His method of foretelling the future was by an arrangement of beads known as *Kalanju* or *Kalarchi*. Also, he used to dance, inspired by Muruga;[2] he was Subrahmanya's medium and in his God-intoxicated state, he would utter profound truths, or forecasts of the future. He would make known during the dance, the nature of the disease that tormented the lady-love, and the person responsible therefor. On these occasions he was sometimes given an image of the sufferer called "Kannam" by the latter's parents.[3]

SURVIVAL IN MALABAR

The Velan has survived today with his very name and old occupations, in Kerala. Thurston's *Castes and Tribes of South India* mentions four types of them as living in Cochin. In the Keralotpatti, the Velars are said to excel in *mantravadams*, and that *Velan tullal* is the best of their performances. This *tullal* is a type of dance undertaken by the Velars to ward off the evil influences of devils and goblins specially on women. They also offer, we are told, sacrifices of various sorts to their deities. The Velan of the ancient classics is undoubtedly the ancestor of the Velan of the West Coast; the *tullal* is only a relic of the *veriyattu* performed by the members of this caste in the Sangam Age.

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1. He had a tuft of hair, a small bag and a stick:
"அறுவை தோயு மொருபெருங் குடுமிச்
சிறுபை நாற்றிய பல்தலைக் கருங்கோல்
ஆகுவ தறியும் முதுவாய் வேல!
கூறுக மாதோ கழங்கின திட்பம்"
(Vide my "Tolkappia-Porulathikara-Araichi" p. 65.)
2. "வெறியறி சிறப்பின் வெவ்வாய் வேலன்
வெறியாட் டயர்ந்த காந்தளும்" Purattinai-iyal, of Tolkappiyam, Sutra 60 The veriyadal, or dance was also merely undertaken by Kurava women. Vide Thiru-muru-karrup-padai lines. 222–44).
3. Cf. Ainkurunuru. 245–Commentary.

SECTION IV

10. SOME DIVISIONS AND PLACE-NAMES OF THE CERA COUNTRY.

1. NADUS

It was stated in the first chapter of the first part that Kerala answers to the following *nadus* of the twelve old divisions of the Tamil country :—

1. *Kuttanadu.* (குட்டநாடு)
2. *Kudanadu.* (குடநாடு)
3. *Karkanadu.* (கற்கநாடு)
4. *Venadu* (வேணாடு)
5. *Pulinadu.* (பூழிநாடு)
6. *Panrinadu.* (பன்றிநாடு)

We will now examine these names further and see how all these formed the country of the Ceras.

KUTTANADU (குட்டநாடு)

This word is the Tamil equivalent of the Sanskrit *kupakadesa.* The Travancore kings have been called *kupakesa* and *kupakar-kon*[1] (கூபகர்கோன்). *kupaka* with its Tamil equivalent *kuttam* would indicate a low lying region. The area around modern Quilon goes by the name of *kuttanad* even today; the topography of the region is also in accord with its name. The saint *Nammalvar* gives us a clue to the identification of *Kuttanad* when he speaks of Puliyur (புலியூர்) (near *Chengannur* in Central Travancore) as *Kuttanattu Thiru-Puliyur.*[2]

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1. T. A. S. Vol I, No 3. Page 4; Peruntokai, St. 895;—' கூபகர் கோன் மகட்கொடுப்ப'

2. Thiruvaimoli. 8, 9, 1— "குட்டநாட்டுத் திருப்புலியூர்."

The title *kuttuvan* (குட்டுவன்) used with reference to ancient Cera kings like *Palyanai-celkelu-kuttuvan* (பல்யானைச் செல்கெழு குட்டுவன) is apparently derived from the name of the country ruled over by the kings of *Kuttanad.* The present royal line of Travancore who are also *kupakesas* is of the old stock of Cera Kings.

In Silappatikaram a scholar by name *Parasara* (பராசரன்) is said to have travelled from Cola-nadu to Kerala, passing along the *Podiyil* hill. His object was to have audience of *Palyanai-celkelu-kuttuvan.* This *Kuttuvan*, as his name suggests, must have had his capital in *Kuttanad* (or Central Travancore) which might have been reached by the scholar *Parasara* after he crossed the Aramboly pass near the *Podiyil* hill. If the capital of this king had been in North Kerala, say, *Musiri* or *Tondi*, *Silappatikaram* would not have mentioned the route along the Podiyil hill, as the scholar's means of access to the Cera country.

KUDANADU (குடநாடு)

We learn from *Ahananuru*[3] that this country was governed by *Kuttuvan* and it was a fertile area of lotus ponds and jack-trees. It lay north of *Odungadu* (ஒடுங்காடு). The epithet *Kudam*, meaning west, in a general sense, indicates the Cera country lying in the western direction, but here the *Kudunadu* is a specific area, the *Kudanad* proper, so to say. The identification of this area depends on the identity of *Odungad*, which has not yet been esta-

3. நெடுங்கா லாசினி ஒடுங்காட் டுப்பர்
விசிபிணி முழவிற் குட்டுவன் காப்பப்
பசியென வறியாப் பணைபயி லிருக்கைத்
தடமருப் பெருமை தாமரை முணையின்
முடமுதிர் பலவின் முழுநிழல் வதியும
குடநாடு பெறினும் தவிரலர்—(Akam)

blished. The name *Odanadu*[4] is found in inscriptions and one *Odanattadigal* (ஓடநாட்டடிகள்) is mentioned. Whether these two names are identical awaits further clarification.

KARKANADU (கற்காநாடு)

This would mean literally a country abounding in stones or having a forest of stones.[5] The word is used in connection with *Nanjilnadu* and it is noteworthy that this latter name of *Nanjilnadu* is not one of the twelve divisions of the commentators.

A chieftain of *Nanjilnadu* by name *Nanjil Valluvan* is called *Perunkal-nadan.*[6] A village, *Nirupasekhara-nallur* is mentioned in inscriptions as a *Karkadu* (forest of stones) of *Nanjilnadu.*[7] All these imply that the area is full of rocks and boulders, and this is confirmed by names of places near Suchindram like *Kakkattur* and *kakkattucheri.*[8] The epithet *Kallaka nadu*[9] (meaning land with rocks) with reference to this country is also found.

VENADU (வேணாடு)

This is well known as Southern Travancore; it is probably named after *Vel-Ay* who governed it in the Sangam Age. This name is however not mentioned in the Sangam literature.

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4. T. A. S. Vol. VI. Page 38: "Odanadu (ஓடநாடு) is the tract of land represented by the coast territory with Kayamkulam as its former capital." (T. A. S. Vol. I, pp. 290, 291)

5. கற்காட்டு நாடு.

6. Puram 237. "சிறுவெள் ளருவிப் பெருங்கல் நாடனை".

7. நாஞ்சினாட்டுக் கற்காடான நிருபசேகர நல்லூர். T. A. S. Vol. IV, Page 21.

8. கக்காட்டூர் and கக்காட்டுச்சேரி. (T. A. S. Vol. IV, p. 128)

9 கல்லகநாடு (T. A. S. III, Pt. 3. p. 133); கல்லகநாட்டு ஆய்க் குடி (Ibid. VII, p. 111)

PULINADU (பூழிநாடு)

The Sangam classics tell us that this part of the Cera country [10] was once seized by Nannan a chief of *Konkanam*. But later it was reconquered after severe fighting by the Cera King Kalamkaikanni - Narmuti - ceral. The *Malabar Manual* has the following lines:

"*Poolinad* was known as *Polnad* till the latter part of the eighteenth century. This covered the twenty-two *amsams* of the modern taluk of Ponnani."

This is a confirmation of the literary usage of *Pulinadu* as part of the Cera country. The name *Puliyarko* [11] occurs frequently with reference to Cera kings in the *Patirruppattu*. *Paraliati* (the Sanskritised form of *Puliyarpati*) is said to be the title of a king of *Kottayam*. [12] Porlatiri is the title of the chief of the country round Calicut. [13]

PANRINADU (பன்றிநாடு)

This name is frequently used with reference to the *Kongu* country (consisting of areas around Palni, Coimbatore, and Salem) in Tamil literature and inscriptions. The Sanskrit equivalent of the word *Varahanadu* [14] is also sometimes used.

In the *Thiruvilayadal-Puranam* (chapter 59) the name *Panrimalai* (பன்றிமலை) is cited with reference to the Paln hills. In epigraphy, the name *Varahanadu* is used for the Palladam area. [15]

It is well known that the Kongu country was orginally a part of the *Ceranadu* and only later on came to have an independent existence. [16]

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10. Ibid Vol. I, pp. 647. 666.
11. பதிற்றுப்பத்து 3, 1—"பூழிநாட்டைப் படையெடுத்துத் தழீஇ".
12. Vide Kerala Society Papers, series 3, p. 136.
13. History of Kerala, Vol II, p. 129.
14. I. M. P. Coimbatore, p. 352.
15. Ibid. same page.
16. Vide "Ceran-Senguttuvan" and "Vanchimanagar".

2. PLACE-NAMES

1. AY-KUDI (ஆய்குடி)

It is known from Sangam Literature as the capital of the Ay kingdom (Aham 198). The famous podiyil hill or Agastya mountain was situated in king Ay's territory. The poet Mudamosiar (முடமோசியார்) in Puram 32 praises Aykudy saying that but for Aykudy in the South, the flat earth would lose its equilibrium due to the weight of the Himalayas in the north.

There are two villages in Travancore known by the name of Aykkudy. One is in Shencottah taluk on the eastern border of the country. The other is near Kottar in South Travancore. Ptolemy says that Kottiara, the present Kottar was the metropolis of the Ay country. Pliny calls the town Kottara.[17] Sri. S. Sanku Aiyar, Sarvadhikariakar, in his learned article entitled "Ancient Travancore" in "Travancore Information and Listener" (Vol. VI, 11, p. 18) has established from inscriptional and literary evidence that the Aykudy near Kottar is the capital of the Ay kingdom which flourished several centuries ago. Ahananuru 198 speaks of a mountain called *Kaviram* (கவிரம்) in the Ay country. It is now gathered that a hill near Kumaracoil in South Travancore is known even today by the name of Kavaram; if it is true, this will be an additional support in favour of the above identification.

2. ADANGODU (அதங்கோடு)

This place is famous as the native village of Adangottasan (அதங்கோட்டாசான்) (literally, a teacher of Adangodu). He was a colleague of Tolkappianar, the author of the

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17. T. A. S. Vol VI. Part I, p. 1.

oldest grammar in Tamil. The fact that Agastya, the teacher of both Adangottasan and Tolkappianar lived on the Podiyil hill and that the second Tamil Sangam where both figured, was at Kavatapuram (probably near Korkai) would seem to support the location of Adangodu, near about Kerala. Curiously enough, a village of this name is found in the Vilavankodu taluk, in South Travancore. (It is noteworthy that the suffix, Kodu in place-names, occurs plentifully in the Kerala region. e. g. Kolik-kodu, Kollan-kodu, Kumarik-kodu, Musirik-kodu, Idai-kodu etc).

3. PARALIARU (பறளியாறு)

The word is a corruption of Pal-thuli, which becomes Pahruli or Parali, meaning, the little drops of water that form into a river. Any nameless river running in jungle or unfrequented ways may be called Paraliaru.

The Palayar running in South Travancore, near Nagercoil, is probably to be identified with the Pahruli river mentioned in Purananuru, song 9. There is another river named Paraliar, which is a tributary to the river Kulithuraiyaru. As this is only a tributary, there is some difficulty in identifying this with the ancient Pahruli.

4. MURANJIYUR (முரஞ்சியூர்)

The poet of Puram 2 is called Muranjiyur Mudinagarayar (முரஞ்சியூர் முடிநாகராயர்). Among the five divisions of the Cochin royal family the maternal line (தாய்வழி) of Murinjiyur is one. The name Murinjiyur used with reference to the Cochin kings may furnish some clue to the identity of the Muranjiyur of the Purananuru. In all probability, the place Muranjiyur has to be located in Cochin State.

5. NARAVU (நறவு)

This place mentioned in the Patirruppattu,[18] is identified by some with the Naoura of Periplus. Yule[19] identifies the town with Mangalore, which is of doubtful propriety.

6. MUSIRI (முசிறி)

Musiri is often mentioned in the Tamil classics as well as in the accounts of ancient European Travellers. This place is generally identified with modern Cranganore (கொடுங்கோளூர்). As it was an old seaport with a prosperous commerce, Pliny has described it in full. He says that "the station for ships is at a distance from the shore and that cargoes have to be landed and shipped by means of little boats".[20] This description of the town is surprisingly confirmed by Puram Song 343[21] describing the town.

MAHODAI (மகோதை)

This name [22] as well as Kodungolur, is used in medieval Tamil literature for Musiri of Sangam literature. It is referred to as Mahodayar Pattanam (மகோதையார் பட்டணம்) in inscriptions. It is wrong to say that the word Mahodayar-pattanam is derived from Mahadevar-pattanam. Most probably it may be a changed form of the word Ma-kodayar-pattanam (மா-கோதையர்-பட்டணம்) or Maha-udayar-pattanam. (மஹா-உதயர்-பட்டணம்). Ma-kodayar-pattanam would mean the City

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18. IV Patigam, Line 60.
19. Cera Kings by K. G. Sesha Aiyar p. 29.
20. Pliny's Natural History.
21 "மீனொடு நெல்குவைஇய குறிமுடையால், கலிச்சும்மை கரை கலக்குறுந்து, கலந்தந்த பொற்பரிசம், கழித்தோணியாற் கரைசேர்க்குந்து,.........முழங்குகடன் முழவின் முசிறி"
22. "கடலங்கரைமேல் மகோதை அணியார் பொழில் அஞ்சைக்களத்தப்பனே" (தேவா. திருவஞ்சைக்களப் பதிகம், 4)

of the great Kodayar or Ceras, [23] and Maha-udayar-pattanam, the city of the great Udayar or Ceras. Udaya is a sanskrit word and Udiyar a Tamil word both indicating the Ceras. In both ways the expression Mahodayar-pattanam means "the capital of the great Ceras".

7. MANGADU (மாங்காடு)

References in the Silappatikaram[24] and Ahananuru[25] make it clear that this place was in the western region. It is also referred in Aham that Mangadu was famous for its beautiful women who were under the strict protection of their fathers. We learn that a place by name Mangad (மாங்காடு) situated on the northern boundary of Travancore was the seat of a rajah who was at first the Kaimal to the king of Cochin. There is also a reference to this place in the inscriptions. [26]

8. UMBARKKADU (உம்பற்காடு)

This name means "elephant forest". The revenues of this area are said to have been gifted away to poet Paranar by king Senguttuvan in reward for his songs. There is a poet hailing from this place, by name Umbarkkattu Ilamkannanar (Aham 264). In Vaikkam (N. Travancore) there is a house bearing the name, Umbarkattu-vidu (K. G. Sesha Aiyar's Cera Kings, p. 14). Probably Umbarkkadu is the same as Velakkadu (வேழக்காடு) mentioned in T. A. S. vol. I. p. 188.

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23. "கோதையர்சர் மகோதையென" (பெரியபுராணம், சேரமான்பெரு.), "வஞ்சியை விட்டிகலஞ்சிய கோதை மகோதை (குலோத். பிள்ளைத்தமிழ்)

24. Chap. II. Line 53—"வங்கேதன் குடமலை மாங்காட்டுள்ளேன்."

25. Song. 288— "பனிகூரடுக்கத்து மகளிர் மாங்காடற்றே".

26. "மாங்காட்டு நாராயணன் கண்ணன் அறியும்"—T. A. S. Vol. II, p. 43.

9. UDAGAI (உதகை)

In the medieval period, the Cera capitals were Kodungolur in the North, Kollam in the Centre, and Udagai in the South. Udayagiri (in its shortened form Udagai) means the hill of the rising sun and the poet of the Kalingattupparani aptly describes Rajaraja I as conquering (or rising over) Udgai like the rising sun. [27]

Even in the Sangam age, the region around Udagai seems to have been the venue of the capital of at least one line of the Ceras. In stanza 61 of the Patirruppattu, King Adukotpattu-ceraladan is stated to have gone west, to lose himself in the sweet music of the dancing maids in a beautiful grove of palms, near the sea shore, with the chill breeze blowing through it. The commentator of the work tells us that he went west of his capital town, towards the sea. This place has obviously to be located in a region where palm trees abound, and near the seashore. We find that palms are natural to the soil only south of Kuzhithurai in Trivandrum division. In North Kerala, the climate is not suitable for palm trees. Probably Udagai (Udayagiri) or some other town, situated in the heart of the palm growing region, and also near the seashore, may have been the capital from which this king went westward to the sea. Also, the frequent battles between the Ceras and the Pandyas described in the Irayanar-kalaviyal-urai point to the existence of a capital in South Travancore. In consonance with this, the favourite garland of the Ceras in ancient Tamil Literature is said to be of palm flowers.

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27. "உதயபானுவொத்து உதகைவென்ற கோன்"—(Raja-parampariam, 18).

10. VELIAM (வெளியம்)

The Ahananuru[28] mentions this town as belonging to the Ceras. A village in Kottarakara taluk bears this name, even today.

11. KOTTAMBALAM (கோட்டம்பலம்)

In Purananuru it is mentioned that a Cera king named Mak-kothai died at Kottambalam.[29] There is a temple named Kottambalam at Kollangodu in Malabar. This may be the place where the above Cera king passed away.

12. PARAIYUR (பறையூர்)

In the Silappatikaram Ilango-Adigal says that Paraiyur[30] was a place where Brahmanas lived and that it was the native place of a famous dancer named 'Kutta-chakkaiyan' (கூத்தச்சாக்கையன்). This is now called Paravoor which is situated on the border of Travancore and Cochin States. There are also old inscriptions[31] denoting Paraiyur.

13. NELVELI (நெல்வேலி)

This place is celebrated as the scene of the battle between the Pandyas and the Ceras in the songs quoted in the commentary to Irayanar-Kalaviyal.[32] Nelveli is identified by some to be Thiru-nelveli or Tinnevelly, but it would be more appropriate to locate it in the Cera country

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28. Song. 359—"வானவரம்பன் வெளியத் தன்ன".
29. Puram, 245—"கோட்டம்பலத்துத் துஞ்சிய மாக்கோதை".
30. Silappatikaram, 3, 76—77— "நால்வகை மறையோர் பறையூர்க், கூத்தச்சாக்கையன் ஆடலின்".
31. T. A. S. Vol. II, p. 190—பறையூர்ரர் செய்வித்த கச்சம்.
32. "நெல்வேலி வென்றான் நெடுமாறன்"; "நெல்வேலி வென்றநின்றசீர் நெடுமாறன்" (Tevaram, Tiruttondattokai).

as most places mentioned in Iraiyanar Kalaviyal are in it. The Pandya king entered the Cera country and fought with the Cera king at Nelveli. A place by the name of Nelveli is found near Kuzhithurai. There are also old inscriptions at this place, (T. A. S. Vol. VII. p. 96) which may be dated back to the 10th century. There are old Siva and Vishnu temples too at this place.

14. NARAIARU (நறையாறு)

It is one of the rivers in Cera country. According to Irayanar–Kalaviyal[33] it was a battle field where Pandyan Nedumaran fought with a Cera king. An inscription in Solapuram says, "east of Naraiaru"[34] in Kerala. The river at Neyyatinkara called at present Neyyaru may probably be identified with Naraiaru found in the inscription.

15. VALLAM (வல்லம்)

In Irayanar-Kalaviyal[35] Vallam is mentioned as a battle field where the Pandya king named Nedumaran fought against a Cera King. This place may be identified with Thiruvallam, an ancient place of worship, situated 3 miles south of Trivandrum.

16. THE RIVER PERIYARU AND ITS HILL-MEN

The *Silappatikaram* *(Vanchikkandam)* describes vividly the visit of the Cera king Senguttuvan to the hills; in his camp on the banks of the river *Periyaru*, the hill-men

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33. "சேரவர்கோன் நறையாற்றழிய" (232).
34. "நறையாற்றுக்குக் கிழக்கு"—(T. A. S. Vol, p. 107)
35. "வல்லத்துவென்றான்".

called *kunrakkuravar*[36] flocked to pay their respects to the monarch, placed at his feet all the rare products of the hills as humble offerings, and told him the true story of Kannaki's ascent to the heavens.

The identification of the river *Periyaru* is bound to be of some interest. The Mackenzie Manuscripts give us the information that two companion[37] hills in the region of the Anamalais have a valley between them, where flows a river called the *Periyaru* by mountain tribes known as *Palingars*. This same river has different names in its journey beyond the hills. At the foot of the hills, it is called *Valaiyaru*; beyond Palghat, it is Ponnani, and near Tirunavay, it is *Bharatapuzha*. The name *Periyaru* or *Brihannadi*[38] is also familiar in inscriptions and literature, for this river flowing near Kolamukku and Tirunavay. As the poet *Ilango-Adigal* describes it, this *Periyaru* rises in the *Ayriaimalai* now known as Aivarmalai which forms part of the *Anamalais*; being a river with resounding torrents and rapids echoing for miles around, it also reminds us of the river of the *Silappatikaram*. It is also to be reckoned as the biggest river, of the Cera region.[39] All considerations thus point to an identification of this river with the *Periyaru* on the banks of which King Senguttuvan encamped. It is clearly out of place to identify, as some have done, the *Periyaru* with the *Sulliamperiyaru*, (சுள்ளியம்பேரியாறு) which rises near the Sivagiri hills in the Tirunelveli district.

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36. This name Kunrakkuravar occurs to a hill tribe in Travancore even to-day. (E. Thurston's Caste and Tribes of South India, Vol. III, p. 123)

37. Hills called *Akka* and *Thangachi malai*: elder and younger sister hills.

38. Ep. Carnatica Indica, No. 82 of 1184 and Kerala Society Papers p. 330.

39. The relative length of the rivers: *Ponnani* 156 miles, *Periyaru* 142 miles, Beporu (வைப்பாறு) 96 miles. (History of Kerala, Vol. I.)

In the Mackenzie Manuscripts, there is a full account, not only of the origin and course of the Periyar, but also an enumeration of the rare products of the *Anamalais* given to the author by the *Palingars*,[40] as the mountain-tribes are called. It may be noted that the *Palingars* bear striking resemblances to the hill-men of old who welcomed King Senguttuvan and that even the rarities listed are practically the same as those mentioned in the *Silappatikaram*. It gives us a pleasant surprise to know that even today the time-honoured custom of the king's visit to the hills lingers on in Kerala. The Kings of Travancore and Cochin go sight-seeing to their fertile hill-sides; time to the picture drawn by Ilango-Adigal, hill-tribes welcome their sovereigns, offering them all the previous yield of the mountains, and receiving in turn, customary honours.

17. KERALA SHRINES IN EARLY TAMIL LITERATURE

Our shrines in South India acquire special distinction only if they have been celebrated in song by the Saiva and and Vaishnava saints of old. It is here proposed to notice briefly the temples in Kerala which have had this privilege of being immortalised in the songs of the Saiva Nayanmars and the Vaishnava Alvars, in the early centuries of the Christian Era.

Tiru-anchaikkalam near Kodungolur has been commemorated in a Decad of verses by the Saiva saint Sundaramurthi Nayanar. He refers to this holy place as *Anchai* also in his poems.[41] The correct and most ancient form of the place-name is clearly *Anchaikkalam* or *Anchai*; in combination with the prefix Tiru (meaning sacred), the name

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40. Anamalai Kaipitu (Kaifiyat) p. 83. (Vanchimanagar p. 54).

41. "ஆழி கடலரையா அஞ்சையப்பர்க் கறிவிப்பதே". Sundara-murti-nayanar Tevaram).

is written as *Tiruvanchaikkalam.* Some historical writers erroneously split up this compound as *Tiru-vanchikkalam* and make this the basis for their identification of the ancient *Vanchi* with Kodungolur. In later inscriptions also the place-name is found as Tiru–anchakkalam and not Thiru-vanchi-kkalam. The god of this place is called *Vanchulesa*[42] by analogy with the name *Vanjulesa* of the god of the Tiruva-nilai temple of *Karuvur* the *Kongu-vanchi.*

Only the shrine stated above can be picked out as honoured in song by the Thevaram Nayanmar. Even *Ceraman Perumal Nayanar*, the famous Kerala King and Saiva saint, has unfortunately omitted to mention in his poems any of the Cera shrines of his day including *anjaikkalam.*

Coming to the shrines immortalised by the Vaishnava Alvars, we find that saint Satakopa known as *Nam-Alvar* has devoted a fair portion of his songs to the praises of the holy places of pilgrimage in the *malai nadu* as the Cera region is called. The shrine's celebrated are twelve in number. *Nam-Alvar's* mother was born in the town of *Tiruvanparisaram* known as *Tiruppatisaram*, in the *malai-nadu*, a little to the west of Nagercoil. The Deity of the place is called *Tiruvalmarban* and is in the sitting attitude, as is clear from Nam-Alvar's description in the *Tiruvaimoli.*[43] In inscriptions dated Malayalam Era 304 (A. D. 1129), 789 (A. D. 1614),[44] we read of the name "Lord *Tiruvalmarbar*," and of "Lord who is pleased to sit in *Tiruppatisaram*," thus making it clear that the name and the attitude of the

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42. T. A. S. Vol. VI, p. 191–2.
43. வருவார் செல்வார் வண்பரிசாரத் திருந்தவென்
திருவாழ்மார்பற் கென்திறஞ் சொல்லார் செய்வதென் ?
—Tiruvaimoli, 8-3-7.
44. T. A. S. Vol, V, p. 157—60.

Deity as described by *Nam-Alvar* had suffered no change right up to a late period. The only change is in the place-name, *Tiruvan-parisaram* becoming *Tiruppatisaram.* The prefix *Tiruvan;* it is to be noted, occurs also in the names of other holy shrines like *Tiruvan-purudottamam* and *Tiruvan-vandur* which have also been celebrated in song by the Alvars.

Sri. *Alagiamanavaladasar* or *Pillai-Perumal Iyengar,* as he is called, in his stanzas on the Vaishnava shrines, known as *Nurrettu-Tiruppati-antati,* speaks of the Lord of *Tiruvan-parisaram* as in the reclining attitude. As the God has been never associated with this attitude, it has to be considered that this is due to either an erroneous tradition handed down or a faulty reading of the text of the Alvar's songs. One of the epigraphs of *Tiruppatisaram* speaks of the provision of food for the lady *Tirupatinangai.* It is quite probable that this *Tirupatinangai* was identical with the mother of our *Alvar,* by name *Udayanangai.* If so, the name *Tirupati–udaya-nangai* (the lady who belonged to Tirupati) should be considered to have been abbreviated to *udaya-nangai.*

The change of a place-name like *Tiruvan-parisaram,* leads us on to similar changes. *Tirukkatkarai* is the name, as found in Nam-Alvar's songs, of a shrine in the Kottayam division of North Travancore. In old Cera inscriptions,[45] the form *Tirukkakkarai* or *Tirukkarkarai* is met with. In one inscription above, the form *Tirukkalkkarai* (திருக்கால்க்கரை)[45] (which is presumably due to a scribe's error in writing out the place-name) is found. *Tiruvan-vandur* in the songs of the Alvar, has been corrupted to Tiruvenmandur or Tiruvanmandur; *Tiruvallaval* has become Tiruvalla today.

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45. T. A. S. Vol. III p. 183.
46. Ibid. p. 170.

The ancient form *Tiruvallaval* has however been preserved in some inscriptions.[47] The old name *Tirukkadittanam* is known as *Tirukodithanam*; *Tiruvaranvilai* of the Alvar has been transformed to "*Aramuzha*" in later inscriptions and speech.

It is obvious that the forms of the place-names mentioned by *Nam-Alvar* (circa 8th century A. D) who knew the usages of his day well, are the ancient forms of the words; all the changes pointed out above cannot be dated earlier than the ninth century A. D.

The study of the place-names of the Cera country is thus a highly interesting and bound to yield the most useful results.

CONCLUSION

11. CORRELATION OF TAMIL LITERATURE WITH KERALA LIFE AND LETTERS

TAMIL LITERATURE AND KERALA : INTER-RELATION :

The foregoing lectures will serve to indicate in a measure how much Kerala history can gain from its correlation with Tamil literature. If a study of Tamil literature is vital for an understanding of Tamil life and thought recorded in its early classics and inscriptions, it is equally true that an acquaintance, if not intimacy with the manners, customs and languages of Kerala, is a necessity for understanding the full importance and significance of Tamil literature.

The second point mentioned needs some elaboration. In the previous chapters, I enlarged on customs obsolete in the Tamil country, but which survive in pristine glory on the

47. T. A. S. Vol. III p. 71.

West Coast. Equally and possibly more striking, is the large number of literary usages and individual words in Tamil which gain their correct meaning and significance, only when looked at in a Kerala context. For some of these words, unaware of the usage in the Western Region, our commentators have been forced to give awkward meanings. There are also many poets of Kerala origin in Tamil, whose literary expressions carry the fragrance of the land of their origin and compel us to start on a literary pilgrimage thither.

I give below some important words and usages for whose meaning Kerala speech and custom provide the key. These, it may be stated, are only a few of the illustrations I happened to come across in the course of my recent studies.

USAGES OF TOLKAPPIAM ILLUSTRATED IN THE KERALA AREA

Some grammatical rules of the Tolkappiam seem as though framed for the Kerala country where only, examples of the usages are to be found surviving. In the Eluttadikaram, sutras 241, 242, 288 and 378 point out that the words pani (பனி), vali (வளி), malai (மழை) and veyil (வெயில்), have a euphonic increment *attu* (அத்து) when used in sentences. As examples of these, we hear in Kerala speech of today :

பனியத்துப் போகருதே (Don't go in fog)
வெயிலத்துப் போகருதே (Don't go in sunshine)

In the commentary on sutra 242, Uraiyasiriar, explaining the phrase "வளியென வரூஉம் பூதக்கிளவியும்" says, "வளியென்று சொல்லவருகின்ற இடக்கரல்லாத ஐம்பெரும்பூதங்களில் ஒன்றை உணர நின்ற சொல்லும்" (by *vali* is meant air, one of the elements and not its vulgar meaning). What is the obscene meaning (இடக்கர்) here referred to. It cannot be found anywhere in Tamil usage. Only in Kerala usage where the word signifies human gas also, gives us the vulgar meaning of the word.

Sutra 348 of the Eluttadikaram gives the rules of Sandhi for compounds of names of father and son or daughter. The father's name precedes the name of the offspring: சேந்தம் பூதன், கீரஞ்சாத்தன் அந்துவஞ்செள்ளை, முருகஞ்சேந்தி. In a Kerala inscription (T. A. S, Vol. I. p. I99), this same order is followed, for twelve persons. In present day Kerala speech also, the compound is familiar as Sankaran Kesavan (சங்கரன் கேசவன்) meaning Kesavan, the son or nephew of Sankara. It is needless to point out that such usages are very rare in the post Sangam period in the Tamil country.

There are also many individual words cited in the *Tol-kappiam* which are in use today only in the Kerala area. Sutra 561 of the *Porulatikaram (marapiyal)* mentions *munga* (மூங்கா) now in use only in Malabar for the owl (and its young one). Sutra 623 of the same chapter gives forms of words in use at Tolkappianar's time–*tattai* (தத்தை), *pusai* (பூசை), *kandi* (கண்டி). The three words meaning parrot, cat, and he–buffalo are used in Malabar in the very senses pointed out by the author of the old grammar. Other words of *Tol-kappiam* like *ulinai* (உழிஞை),*unnam* (உன்னம்) *puhavu* (புகவு), still live in the speech of the West Coast. *Ulinai* is the *Korran* (கொற்றான்) flower which even *Uraiya-siriar* noted as the usage of the western region.[1] *Unnam* is used for the *Ilavu* tree (இலவமரம்) in modern Kerala speech. *Puhavu* in sutra 107 of *Porulatikaram* is to be interpreted as food (உணவு). Also in a Kerala inscription of *Vikra-maditya Varaguna* (T. A. S. Vol. I p. 8), we read "பஞ்சக்கம் செய்தான் புகவு பெறுவான். This means that the person who does the பஞ்சக்கம் or பஞ்சாயத்து (settlement or judgment in a dispute) will get food. Other inscriptions which use *puhavu*

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1. Vide Tolkappiya-poruladikara-araychi, by the present author, p. 110.

(புகவு) to mean food, bear testimony to the survival of the word in this sense in Kerala. Therefore the meaning admission given to the word *puhavu* written by the Epigraphist is not correct.

SURUIVALS OF SANGAM AND MEDIEVAL WORDS IN KERALA

Examples are many of the words of the Sangam period commonly used today only in Kerala Literature and speech. Either these Sangam words are actually used in the speech of the Western Region or we can find them only in Kerala inscriptions and works. The survival of the Tamil titles of the ancient Cera Kings found in Sangam literature like *Kotai* (கோதை), *Utiyan* (உதியன்) *Porayan* (பொறையன்) and *Kolaman* (கோளமன்) is an interesting commentary on the preservation of ancient Tamil in Kerala. The name *Kotai* is found in current use as *Godavarma*, *Kotaiyaru* (or the river *Kotai*). *Utiyan* is traceable in place names like Utiyanperur near Tripunithura; the name *Porayan*, comes back to as in Kerala inscriptions as *Purayan-Kandan* and *Kotai-purayan*;[2] the title *Kolaman* (the king of *Kola*) used in *Irayanar Ahapporul*[3] has survived in *Kolatri* and the territory is still called *Kolattunadu*, as pointed out by Sri K. P. Padmanabha Menon.[4]

Particularly striking, is the universal use of the Tamil title "Ceraman" in Kerala inscriptions down to the present age. We read of *Ceraman Tanu Ravi*[5] *Ceraman Ramavarma*[6] *Ceraman Vanci-martandan*.[7]

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2. T. A. S. Vol. III, pp. 177, 185 ;
3. கோளம் ஒட்டுடைந்தார் p. 225.
4. History of Kerala, Vol. I, p. 428.
5. T. A S. Vol. V, p. 76.
6. The Colas, p 614.
7. Vide Part I of this volume, section II, p. 50.

A few other interesting examples of ancient Tamil words, commonly used in Kerala literature and speech, but obsolete in the Tamil-speaking area, are given below:

• *Kanam* (காணம்): A coin, now equivalent to three *kalanjas* or 1½ fanams, in Kerala according to Dr. Gundert's Malayalam Dictionary. But the ancient Sangam coin must have been of more value.

Arppu (ஆர்ப்பு):[1] Din of battle.

Pitikai (பீடிகை): Market. (Silap. 5, Line 41)

Kadumsul (கடுஞ்சூல்):[2] Pregnancy nearing confinement. Colloquial usage in Kerala is *Kadunal* (கடுநல்).

Valamai (வாலாமை):[3] Pollution (due to childbirth); நாட்டு வாலாமை (polution due to death in Royal family)

Tarru (தற்று):[4] Fasten (clothes strongly)

Kayantalai (கயந்தலை)[5] Young one. Colloquial usage in Kerala is *kasantalai* (கசந்தலை).

Vili (விளி): Call.

Savattu (சவட்டு)[6] Overwhelm, carry the day.

Padaippu (படைப்பு):[7] Wealth.

Pulukku (புழுக்கு):[8] Pudding (of Jaggery, usually)

Ponvanikan (பொன்வாணிகன்): Goldsmith. (Pattuppattu, p. 287.)

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1. வென்றிகொள் வீரர் ஆர்ப்பினும் பெரிதே. (Aham 36)
2. நின்னயந்துறைவி கடுஞ்சூற் சிறுவன் (Aham. 304)
3. வாலாமைநாள் நீங்கிய பின்னர் (Silap. Chap. 15, l. 24).
4. தெய்வ மடிதற்றுத் தான் முந்துறும் (Kural).
5. கயந்தலை மடப்பிடி....(Pattuppattu, *Malaipadukadam* line 307)
6. மன்பதை சவட்டும் கூற்றமுன்ப (Patirrupattu; Aham, 375)
7. நின் வரம்பில் படைப்பே. (Pattirruppattu). The Cochin Royal line is known as "Perum-padaippu" even today.
8. கட்டிப் புழுக்கிற் கொங்கர் கோவே. (9—1)

POST-SANGAM WORDS AND KERALA:

In the post-Sangam period of religious revival, we find that Kerala usage comes to our help in many cases. In this period, the termination kinru (கின்று) is used in the *Irayanar Kalaviyal* and the poems of the Alvars for example, as a verbal particle indicative of the conditional in perfect tense. The following two illustrations of the usage will make this clear.

"குழவி அழுகின்று எனக்குப்பால் தம்மின், நீராட்டுமின் என்று அழாது, ஆக்கம் வந்ததாக அழுமு" (Kalaviyal p. 40)

"அமரர்கோன் அர்ச்சிக்கின்று அங்ககப்பணி செய்வர் விண்ணோர்" (Tiruvaimoli, 10, 2, 6,).

Here the words அழுகின்று and அர்ச்சிக்கின்று mean "while weeping," "while worshipping".[9] The usage unknown in Sangam literature is, really of Kerala origin used by writers coming from that region and coming to stay in Tamil literature of the period. An inscription of *Ramar Tiruvadi Kulasekhara-Chakravarthi* at Quilon of the 11th century has the same usage of "முட்டுகின்றே"[10] (meaning "while knocking").

Examples of individual words current in Post-Sangam age and now familiar in Kerala are the following :—

Paraidal (பறைதல்): [11] to speak.
Orupadu (ஒருபாடு): [12] excessive.

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9. Vide My Collected Essays (ஆராய்ச்சித்தொகுதி), pp. 305-307
10. "தெள்ளாயிரநாழி செலவிடுவிது......செலவு முட்டுகின்றே ஐஞ்ஞாழி அரி தண்டப்படுவிது" (T. A. S, Vol. V, p. 45)
11. ஈசன் பாலோர் அவம் பறைதல் (Thiruvaimoli, IV, 10, 4), கோனே சிறிது கொடுமை பறைந்தேன் (Thiruvacakam, Tirucatakam, 85).
12. ஒருபாடுழல்வான் (Tiruvaimoli, VIII, 3, 7,)

Achan (அச்சன்)[13] : father.

Enduve (எந்துவே)[14] : what

Kurukkum (குறுக்கும்)[15] : is near at hand.

Tevaram (தேவாரம்)[16] : worship in a house; god worshipped in one's house.

Palli (பள்ளி)[17] : adjective, meaning 'royal' or 'divine'. In Kerala, Pallikkettu means 'royal wedding', Palli-padai means 'royal cremation' and Pallitamam means 'royal garland'.

Tiruvadi (திருவடி)[18] :-Lord, King.

Nittu (நீட்டு)[19] : Royal writ.

Kulttal (கூழ்த்தல்)[20] : to doubt, to be confused.

Kulkkadai (கூழ்க்கடை)[21] : Grainstall.

Neridu (நேரிது)[22] : cloth.

Pani (பனி)[23] : fever.

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13. Thiruvacakam, (Thirucatakam, 29.)

14. அடியேன் ஆதரித்தழைத்தா லது எந்துவே என்றருளாயே (Thiruvacakam–Arutpattu).

15. திருநாவாய் குறுக்கும் வகையுண்டு கொலோ கொடியேற்கே (Tiruvaimoli IX, 8, 1.)

16. நம் தேவாரத்துக் கோயில் திருமண்டபத்து முதலி (S. I. I. V. p. 222). நம் தேவார்த்துக்கு திருப்பதியம் பாடும் பெரியான் (S. I. I. VIII. P. 145.) நினைகைத் தேவாரமோ (தேவாரம்=திருக்காச்சை) —Idu or the commentary to the Prabandham.
விளங்கு செம்பொனின் அம்பலக் கூத்து நீ விரும்பிய தேவாரம் (Ep. Indica, Vol. XXIII, pp. 180—1)

17. cf. திருப்பள்ளித்தாமம், பள்ளிச்சிவிகை, பள்ளிபடுத்தல். (S, I. I. V, P. 153)

18. 'திருவடியை நாரணனை' (Tiruvaimoli, 4—9—11)

19. நீட்டோலை வாசியா நின்றான் (மூதுரை)

20. ''அவனிவனென்று கூழேன்மின்." (Ibid 3—6—9)
cf. 'ஹந்த கூழ்த்தேன்' (Grandha-ratnam Mss. A Malayalam poem)

21. 'கூழ்க்கடையுங் கெட்டி......வாணிபமுஞ்செய்து' (T. A. S, Vol. III, p. 220—1.) Kulkkadai is the corruption of Kulakkadai.

22. குழிப்பாடி நேரிது (நன்னூல். உரை) The meaning is cloth of the place known as Kulippadi.

23. 'கொங்கில் வீழ் பனிநோய்' (Periapuranam).

WORDS FROM TAMIL EPIGRAPHY IN KERALA SETTING

Medieval inscriptions in Tamil contain a number of of words which have to be understood in a Kerala setting. Examples are as follows :–

Saveru (சாவேறு)[24] : suicide troops. '*Chaver*' is the name current in Kerala.

Akkan (அக்கன்)[25] : Elder sister.

Ulpadu (உள்பாடு)[26] : supervision ; secretaryship.

Mulaivilai (முலைவிலை)[27] payments to women in consideration of marriage. This is used in Kothanu-Ravi's epigraph (T. A. S. Vol II p. 81.) This is also a term in current usage in Malabar.

Pulari (புலரி)[28] : dawn.

Enough has been said to show that the study of the Tamil language and literature is bound to gain immensely by correlating it with Kerala literature and epigraphy down the centuries. The scholar can profitably go to Kerala sources for help when he comes across lacuna in the history of ancient usages or words in Tamil. This branch of study, of the interaction of languages and literatures, is still a virgin field ; as yet, it awaits the loving labour of devoted research workers. Let us hope that the coming years will witness the fulfilment of thorough and exhaustive work in this fascinating field of study.

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24. "சாவேறெல்லாம் தனிவிசும்பேற" (Peruntokai, Verses 799, 1110.)

25. S. I. I. Vol. II, p. 2.

26. படையுள்படுநர் (சிலப். 8, 13), சேனையுள்படுநர் (பெருங்கதை), மன்னர்க்குள்படு கருமத்தலைவர் (திவா), கோயில் உள்பாடுஞய் (T. A. S. Vol. VI.)

27. முலைவிலையோடு பொன்னணிதல் (Kalaviyal-Urai, Sutra 23),

28. T. A. S. Vol. V, p. 65. [p. 115 .

APPENDIX

NOTES ON SOME TOPICS OF INTEREST

A. THE CAPITAL OF THE CHERAS

In early Tamil literature and inscriptions, the capital city which formed the seat of government of the ancient Cheras is known as *Karuvur*, *Vanchi*, and *Vanchimanagar*. There have been discussions and differences of opinion between scholars regarding the identification of '*Vanchi*' with present-day towns; it is not proposed here to enlarge upon or enter into the merits of the arguments advanced on either side. Generally speaking, one fact stands undisputed, and this is worth our attention. Wherever the capitals of the Cheras were situated throughout the changing centuries, they were all honoured by the name *Vanchi*. Tamil scholars know that in the Sangam classics and in ancient inscriptions on stone and metal, *Karuvur* in the Kongu area is known as *Vanchi*.[1] The modern town of Dharapuram—a corruption of the name *Rajarajapuram*—which was the seat of government of the Kongu Cheras of the later period, is also called *Vanchi* in epigraphs and literature.[2] The name *Vanchinadu* is used with reference to the town of *Kaveripuram* (also called *Tuvalai*) in Kongunadu.[3] Again, in inscriptions of the

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1. Vide citations in my *Araichai-Tohuthi* pp. 250—58.

2. A. R. no. 620 of 1922; Nos. 213, 228 of 1920 c. Vide also *Vanchimanagar* p. 163. "Leaving Vanchinagar, (he) reached the ancient mighty Vanchi" (வஞ்சிநகரகன்று ஆதிமாபுரவஞ்சியை மேவி) Here, *Vanchinagar* refers to Dharapuram, while the *Adimapura-vanchi*, the ancient and mighty city of Vanchi, is Karuvur. In the *Dharapurappuranam* and *Perurppuranam*, the name *Vanchi* is used with reference to Dharapuram. Vide Ep. Ind. Vol. XVII, p. 298a— "கொங்குவஞ்சி."

3. A. R. No. 139, 193 of 1927.

Kongu area, we read of *kuru-vanchinadu* and *Ila-vanchinadu* (meaning miniature or small *Vanchinadu*).[4] From the *Periapuranam* and the commentary to the *Silappatikaram* by *Adiyarkunallar*, it is seen that the name *Vanchi* had also reference to *Kodungolur* on the West Coast. The fact is well known that even today, the kings of Travancore bear the title *Vanchipala*, that a portion of their capital city of Trivandrum bears the name *Vanchiyoor*[5], and that the kingdom itself goes by the name, *Vanchibhumi.*

Vanchi (or *Vanchinagar*) and *Vanchinadu* were evidently the most ancient names of the Chera capital and kingdom which later generations adopted, with characteristic reverence for antiquity. The inference is strengthened on all hands that the several royal dynasties of Chera Kings which ruled over the various parts of the widespread Chera kingdom in various stages of history reckoned it a proud privilege to name their capital towns and territories after their first capital and first kingdom.

B. THE TRADITIONAL ANCESTRY OF THE CHERAS

Of the three crowned heads of Tamilagam, the Cholas are said to spring from the Sun-God *(Suryakula)* and the Pandyas from the Moon-God *(Chandrakula)*. But the Cheras are usually referred to in general terms as the "descendant of the gods",[6] "the heavenly person", so that no more can be inferred except that they were of divine origin. Some poets have, however, ascribed ancestry from the Fire-God (Agni) to the Cheras,[7] in conformity with

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4. Ep. Car. Vol. IX 10. 57, X No. 86.
5. T. A. S. Vol. III, p. 20.
6. 'வானவர் தோன்றல்', 'வானவன்'—Silap. 25, 3; 26, 150.
7. இவன் செந்தழலோன் மரபாகி யீரேழுலகும் புகழ்சேரன். (வில்லிபாரதம், திரௌபதை மாலை. 45)

tradition which speaks of the ancient royal dynasties of India as descended from the Sun, Moon and Fire gods. But the evidence of the Sangam classics does not warrent such an assumption.

In inscriptions, which are later than the period of the Sangam, some Cheras are given a Solar origin, some others are supposed to be of the line of the Moon-God,[8] and yet another group are said to belong to both Sun and Moon, to the *Chandradityakula.*[9] Saint Kulasekhara-Alvar sings of *Sri Rama* as "the jewel of our line"[10] and from this, it is evident that the Chera dynasty of which Kulasekhara was descended, hailed from the Suryakula to which *Sri Rama* belonged. The traditions of the Chera Kings confirm this solar ancestry.[11] But against this, we have to set the fact that *Sangrama-dhira* alias *Ravi Varma*, one of the acknowledged ancestors of the royal line of Travancore, is said to have belonged to the *Yadukula*, sprung from the *Chandravamsa* (line of the Moon-God).[12] It is worthy of note here that the *Ay* kings who ruled the southern region of Kerala known as *Venad* belonged to the *Yadukulavrishni* line,[13] which was a part of the *Chandrakula.* These *Ay* kings merged later on with the Kerala kings, enlarging the *Chandravamsa.*

An explanation for all this variety of genealogies is not far to seek. The Chera country was ruled over by several lines of kings. Different branches of the ruling dynasties in

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8. A. R. No. 445 of 1928-29.
9. I. M. P. C b. Nos. 106, 107.; T. A. S. Vol. V, 163-4.
10. "எங்கள்குலத் தின்னமுதே இராகவனே" (Perumal Tirumoli, 8, 3).
11. T. A. S. Vol. V. p. 19; Vide also Tolkappiam, uvamaviyal, Sut. 32; Perasiriar commentary.
12. Ep. Ind. Vol. IV, No. 17. p. 146-7
13. T. A. S. Vol I. No. 2.

course of time acquired associations with Surya, Chandra and Agni. Some coins of the Chera Kings have the crescent and the sun inscribed on them signifying their descent from these gods. Occasionally, the catholicity of the Chera kings admitted the adoption of princes of the blood royal of the neighbouring Pandya and Chola Kings. We may read in historical works like the *Keralotpatti* of such memorable occurrences.

C. THE CHERA SYSTEM OF SUCCESSION

In the Sangam period, the Chera kings who formed an integral part of the Tamil country followed the paternal system of inheritance from father to son, just like their fellow-rulers, the Pandyas and the Cholas. This is clear from a study of the Sangam classics. Even post-Sangam inscriptions from the Chera region point unmistakably to the fact of paternal succession obtaining in the area, both for the rulers and the ruled. *Sangrama-dhira* alias *Ravi Varma* who reigned over the Chera country in the 13th century A. D. is stated in an epigraph to have been the son of *Jayasimha Maharaja* by Queen *Umadevi*.[14] Another king is characterised as "the most famous son of Ravi Varma," thus implying a paternal inheritance.[15] The Ay kings, of South Travancore whose line ultimately merged with that of the Chera kings were also subject to the law of paternal inheritance, judging from their inscriptions.[16] That not only kings, but commoners followed this system is made plain from an inscription of the ninth century at *Katikaippattinam* which says :

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14. Ep. Ind. Vol. IV. No. 17.
15. T. A. S. Vol. IX, p. 19.
16. Ibid. Vol. I. p. 4.

The children of the children of the children of *sorakan sendan* shall plough and maintain (land),[17]

Not merely the names of men but the names of women, too, are best interpretated according to paternal inheritance. Names like *Murugan–sendi Nakkan-korri*, *Adichan-umayammai*[18] must be taken as compounds where the first element is the name of the father, and the second, the name of the daughter, the whole signifying So-and-So, identified as So-and So's daughter. The rules of the ancient grammar Tolkappiam speak of compound names like these where the names of father and children are conjoined; illustrations of Tolkappiam sandhi rules are thus plentiful in the Chera country, as seen from the names in inscriptions.

In very late inscriptions, the nominal compounds are capable of being interpreted according to the system of matriarchal succession. But in older inscriptions, it is clear beyond doubt that the names indicate compounds of father and son or daughter, according to the usage laid down in the Tolkappiam. A detailed discussion of the structure and significance of these compounds may be found in the chapter on "The Chera succession" in my *Collected Essays.*[19]

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17. T. A. S. Vol. I. p. 199, *Sorakan Sendan* means *sendan,* the son of *sorakan.* It is to be noted that the emphasis is on Sendan's children (மக்கள்) and not his sister's children (மருமக்கள்). It is obvious that all the compound names in this inscription are to be interpreted in the light of succession from father to son.

18. *Murugan-sendi* is *Sendi* the daughter of *Murugan.* This *Murugan* is stated to belong to the *Tenganadu.* *Sendi* was given in marriage to the *Ay* kings of *Venad.*

19. Collected Essays or *Araichi Tohuthi* pp. 381, 393—7

D. A NOTE ON 'TUNJIYA'

The Tamil Kings are often characterised by the epithet *tunjiya*,[20] as in colophons like the following:

Cheraman Kottambalattu-t-tunjiya-makkodai
Kudakarattu-t-tunjiya maranvaluthi
Kurappalli-t-tunjiya Killivalavan

In these names, the word ***tunjiya*** obviously means 'died' and the kings are identified as So-and-So whose end was at such-and-such a place. In later Tamil literature, this usage becomes practically obsolete except for stray references as *Karuvur-t-tunjiya-pukalcholar* and *Anaimel-tunjina-devar.*[21] Curiously enough, this practice of referring to kings as "So-and-So who died at such-and-such a place" survives in the Kerala area. The Cochin Kings, who belong to one of the ancient royal lines of the Cheras, are referred to in this manner as *tippatta*[22] (a synonym of *tunjiya*).

Irunalakkudaiyil tippatta Tambiran
Tiruchuril tippatta Tambiran

The Samudri Kings of Kozhikode (Zamorins of Calicut) are also similarly identified.

It is worthy of note here that the Chera Kings were greatly inclined to lead a contemplative life, renouncing the pleasures of the world. The Chera monarch *Palyanai-chel-kelu-kuttuvan* is described in the *Patirruppattu* (3rd decad)

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20. "துஞ்சிய" as in colophons:
சேரமான் கோட்டம்பலத்துத் துஞ்சிய மாக்கோதை
(Puram 245)
கூடகாரத்துத் துஞ்சிய மாறன் வழுதி
குராப்பள்ளித் துஞ்சிய கிள்ளிவளவன்
21. கருவூர்த் துஞ்சிய புகழ்ச்சோழர்: The Chola who is reputed as having died at Karuvur.
ஆனைமேல் துஞ்சினதேவர்: The king who died on his elephant.
22. தீப்பட்ட: received the *agnisamskara* ie. was cremated or met his death. The Travancore kings who pass away are referred to as 'நாடுநீங்கியவர்" (those who have left the country).

as having forsaken his royal robes, to undertake penance in the forest where his Guru, *Nedum-parathayanar* retired. The *Silappatikaram* speaks of the magnificent renunciation of the empire of worldly pleasures by the younger brother of King Senguttuvan, later celebrated as *Ilango-Adigal.* The life-story of the Vaishnava saint Kulasekhara, a Chera King in his earlier days, who put his son on the throne and devoted himself to matters of the spirit is well-known. The *Periapuranam* speaks of the mighty renunciation of the Chera *Sengorporayan*, and *Cheraman Perumal Nayanar.* Why speak of the past alone? It was but yesterday that one of the Cochin kings repeated history by surrendering his crown in favour of his younger brother, and taking to *vanaprastha.* The old Cochin kings after retirement, spent their days of serenity at Kankanoor, (கணையனூர்) near Tripunithura. (*Vide*, History of Kerala, Vol I. p. 539).

D. A UNIQUE SET OF KERALA WARRIORS

In past ages, the warriors of Chera country were greatly esteemed for their signal valour. Of these warriors, special mention should be made of the *Chavers*, a group of fighters who charged as one man into the enemy's ranks, determined to meet their end or victory. Traditions of the *Malainadu* dating back to a century ago, speak eloquently of this type of heroism, (reminding us of the warriors of Marathon in Greek history). In the laudatory preface *(meykkirti)* of the inscription of Kulottunga Chola I recording his *Kottaru* battle,[1] deservedly special note is made of the monarch's encounter with these 'suicide troops' of the Chera country; the Chola king's victory was really a "Pyrrhic victory" owing to the mighty onrush of the *chavers.*

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1. Peruntokai, st. 799 Lines 59—61.

Judging from inscriptions the fore-runners of the *chavers* in earlier ages, were the heroes called *orrai–sevakar.* An eighth century herostone inscription of the Pandya, ***Maran Sadayan*** speaks of the valour of certain of his warriors called *orrai-sevakar.*[2] Another inscription at Chera-mangalam of Sundara-Chola-Pandya refers to one *Mayalatti*, an *orrai-sevakan.*[3] What is the meaning of the phrase, *orrai-sevakan* ? Obviously it must signify unique heroism; it must be taken to mean a *sevakan* or fighter who could hold his own by himself. (*orrai*: by oneself, alone). References to heroism in parallel expressions are common in inscriptions: *Ekavira,*[4] *Bhuvanekavira, tani-Sevakan, tani ninru venra Chlaukki.* All these expressions emphasise heroism, unique of its kind. It is plainly inappropriate to take the phrase *orrai–sevakan* to mean a fighter engaged as a (ஒற்று) spy.

That these warriors were famous and almost proverbial heroes is seen from an inscription at Tirukkoyilur in South Arcot District, speaking of *Malayana-orrai-sevakar* (the single-handed fighters of Malayalam).[5] It is thus apparent that like the *chavers*, these unique warriors courted death in war; fighting by themselves, either to victory or to death. To the Saiva saint Manikkavacagar no epithet better than *orrai-sevakan* suggests itself when he sings of how Lord Siva appeared as an invincible and lone warrior to protect a Pandya king, one of his sincerest devotees, suddenly attacked by a multitude of his enemies; the saint visualised Lord Siva

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2. T. A. S. Vol. I. p. 158. "பெருமானடிகள் உள்ளன்பு மிக்குள இரணகீர்த்தியும் ஆமர்க்கழியும் உள்வீட்டின் ஒற்றைச் சேவகர் கோட்டையழியாமை காத்தெறிந்து" (Trivandrum Museum Inscription)
3. Ibid. Vol. V p. 30.
4. S. I. I. IV p. 14; Peruntokai, st. 917; S. I. I. IV p. 195.
5. Ep. Ind. Vol. VII. p. 141; T. A. S. Vol. I p. 159.

appearing in the guise of an *orrai-sevakan* the symbol of matchless heroism.[6]

Indeed, the people of the *malai or cheranadu* are known for their perseverance and power of carrying things through, in spite of odds. This has been called "the siege of Malayalars." The commentary to the *Tiruvaimoli*, known as *Idu* has the following tribute to Kerala: "If Malayalees wish to get a thing from a person, they will never move unless they receive it from him; they will 'lay siege' to him..... There was a standstill even after the lapse of thirty *nalikais* (time) just like "the siege of Malayalars".[7]

Such being the unshakable perseverance of the men of Kerala, there is no wonder in its warriors displaying a glorious courage and endurance on the battle-field.

E. MALAYALAM AND THE REGION TO ITS EAST

The name *Malayalar* (*Malayalee*) signifying the people of the *Malainadu* does not at all find a place in the Sangam classics. But it gains currency in literature and inscriptions of later periods. The *Tevaram* speaks of *Paluvur–Aran* worshipped by Brahmanas who are *Malayalars*,[1] and of *Paluvur* which is worshipped and frequented by *Malayalars*.[2] The adjectival form of this word *malayalam* is *malayan* as is seen in the expressions: *malayan brahmanar*,[2] *malayana*

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6. Tiru-vasakam, Tiruppandi-patikam, 10—
"வீற்றிருந்தான் பெருந்தேவியுந் தானுமோர் மீனவன்பால்
ஏற்றுவந்தார் உயிருண்டதிற லொற்றைச்சேவகனே."
7. Siege of Malayalars: மலையாளர் வளைப்பு (ஈடு. 10–3–3).
1. அந்தணர்களான மலையாளரவரேத்தும்.........பழுவூரான்.
மலையாளர் தொழுதேத்திப் பயில்கின்ற பழுவூரே.
(Tevaram, p. 325, 4, 11.)
2. S. I. I. Vol. V, p. 166.

orrai-sevakar,[3] *malayan sial.*[4] The Malayala language and script are known as *malayanma.*

It is worthy of note that the name *Malayalar* has been used in Tamil inscriptions to refer not merely to the men of Kerala, but also the men of the *Kollimalai* (Coimbatore Dt) and the *Chengam* area of the North Arcot district, in the Madras Province. We read of : *Kollimalayalar*, the *malayalar* of the foot of the Kolli hills, *malayala mudaligal and mudunir malayalar.*[5] As the *Kolli* and *Chengam* areas (included in the *Palkunrak kottam* or the district of many hills) are mountainous tracts, the term *malayalar* was used for the residents of those *malai* or mountain regions. Later, there was a specialisation in the meaning of the word; it came to refer mostly to the *Kadal malainadu* or the Chera region enclosed by the hills and the sea.

Trade, education, religious propaganda and dispensation of charities—a multitude of purposes guided the footsteps of of the *Malayalars* to the Tamil nadu, lying east of them, even in ages past. Tamil inscriptions and poems speak of their trade in the best varieties of horses, brought from far-off countries like Arabia. The following citations of names in epigraphs[6] make this clear :

Nallur Tuppa Nayakkan, a horse-merchant of *malaimandalam.*

Talaippalli Govindan, one of the horse-merchants of *malaimandalam.*

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3. மலையாண் ஒற்றைச் சேவகர்; Vide Foot Note 5 on page 74.
4. மலையாண் சியல். (Sial means lamp. comp. ஈழச்சியல்)
5. கொல்லி மலையாளர் (A. R. 499,501 of 1929–30), அடிவாரத்து மலையாளர், மலையாளமுதலிகள், முதுநீர்மலையாளர் (S. I- I. Vol. VII, p. 117).
6. S. I. I. Vol IV, p. 149.

Saint Manikkavacagar also speaks of Lord Siva crossing the *Kudanadu* (Kerala) in the guise of a leader of merchants trading on horses.[7].

Besides horses, many were the rare things of Kerala which found a favourite market in Tamil Nadu. Of these an article called *Malayansial*[8] finds mention in inscriptions. This is a variety of oil lamp. The artistic workmanship of Kerala oil lamps which is well known to all Tamils even today, thus has its origin in the distant past.

Many are the people of *malaimandalam* celebrated for their benefactions. Among many names in Tamil inscriptions we may note that the following men belonging to the village of *Muranottamangalam* in Valluvanad area of Malaimandalam, whose munificence was shown to the temples and the people of the Eastern Region or Tamil Nadu.[9]

(1) Madhavan Ayirkadan.[10]

(2) Irayiran Chola kumaran Ilankesvara Devan.[11]

(3) Irayan Kolarai vacchian Akkan.[12]

The *valluvanad* of these benefactors is the present day Walluvanad of Malabar District.

The people of the *Cheranadu* repaired to the cultural institutions of the Eastern Region on many occasions. One Tamil inscription[13] says that a certain *Kunrattu*

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7. குதிரையைக் கொண்டு குடநா டதன்மிசைச்
சதிர்பட்ச் சாத்தாய்த் தானெழுந் தருளியும்.

The expression குடநாடதன் மிசை means 'beyond the *Kudanadu*' (Kerala) ie. the eastern country.

8. S. I. I. Vol. V p. 18.
9. Ep. Ind Vol X p. 134.
10. S. I. I. Vol IV. p. 147.
11. S. I. I. Vol IV. p. 89.
12. I. M. P. Nl. 202.
13. The Cholas Vol II. p. 735.

Narayanan endowed the general assembly *(mahasabhai)* of *Tiruvidaikali* in *Cholanadu* with lands in the village of *Bodhimangalam* and built also a mutt therein. The purpose of the grant and the institution of the mutt was to enable *Malayala brahmanas* to be educated in the Vedantasastras at *Tiruvidaikali*, a centre of Shastraic scholarship.

There is a long galaxy of great religious men who arose in Kerala and spread their fame in Tamil Nadu: *Adi Sankaracharya*, *Chendalankara Dasa*, *Nalanthikal Narayana Dasa*, and *Kulasekhara Nambi*, to mention a few. An account of some of these personages has already been given in Part I of this Volume.

ERRATA

PAGE	LINE	FOR	READ
8	16	memoral	memorial
,,	16	eoccasion	occasion
,,	17	ase	case
,,	17	Omanab	Onam and
11	1	Pripal	Paripadal
,,	16	bases	basis
12	Footnote	Delete repetition of footnote 12	
15	9	Utsavum	Utsavam
17	10	heroes back down	heroes hack down
24	Footnote 3, line 3	cresent	crescent
32	23	Villupuram	Vilupuram
34	4	Delete the words "to him" after "a brother was born."	
,,	6	founding	foundling
36	14	Silappatikaram	The Silappatikaram
,,	24	hair flunk	hair flung
37	30–31	Delete 'has been made in inscriptions' and add at the end of the sentenee.	
42	1	S. India	South India
,,	11	Ezahava	Ezhava
53	Footnote	8	28
56	12	time to	true to
,,	14	previous yield	precious yield
62	5	SURUIVALS	SURVIVALS
64	6	in perefect tense	imperfect tense